



PREJUDICE AND PRIDE

School histories of the freedom struggle
in India and Pakistan

Krishna Kumar



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Preface

The idea of this book has a rather long and fortuitous history. Its seed was sown in the late 1970s during the course of neighbourly conversations I had with a Commonwealth scholar from Peshawar who lived in the room facing mine at the St George hostel in Toronto. Talking to him was like looking through an intricately carved screen. At times, even the ordinary daily news seemed to acquire contrasting meanings for us. I was convinced that our education, especially what we knew of—and as—history, had something to do with our perceptions.

That seed of curiosity about Pakistan's system of education lay dormant for nearly two decades. One opportunity for me to nurture it arose in the late 1980s when Professor Stella Sandahl procured a handful of Pakistani textbooks of history for me. I wrote an article about the perspective I noticed in those texts, and left it at that, hoping that the gradual strengthening of SAARC

would encourage closer examination of issues like the quality of textbooks. Not surprisingly perhaps, the SAARC initiative did not grow mature enough to work on such *matters of detail*—the term senior civil servants routinely use for everything that lies beyond the broad rhetoric of educational policy.

Then, a decade later, I found myself plunged into this project. This is how it happened. One sultry morning in August 1997, a waiter at the India International Centre, New Delhi, requested me to share my table with a senior guest because the dining hall was unusually crowded. I shortly discovered that I was in the company of India's former ambassador to Saudi Arabia. We talked about India's relations with her neighbour situated immediately to its west, especially about our lack of curiosity to study its society and culture. I was reminded of my Pakistani neighbour in Toronto, and of the trouble I used to have making sense of his views. By the time I had finished my south Indian breakfast and was walking to the library, I had decided to devote myself to studying Pakistan. By the evening of that day I had scribbled a preliminary draft of a proposal outlining a comparative study of the representations of modern history in Indian and Pakistani school textbooks.

I was fortunate to be awarded a Jawaharlal Nehru fellowship to carry out this study. I am thankful to the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund for selecting me, and to Delhi University and my department for granting me leave to avail of it. Many friends, including some of my old students, helped me with the numerous tasks involved in this ambitious project. I can hardly name them all, but I must mention Azra, Iffat, Neeraj, Mohammed Khaliq, Padma, Naresh, Shirley and Kusum. Dr Mubarak Ali, Dr

Rubina Saigol, Mr Anwar Kamaal, Arifa Noor and Yvette Rosser helped me in different ways to understand Pakistan. I gratefully acknowledge their kindness. I owe a special word of thanks to Dr Joachim Oesterheld, who invited me to the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin, allowing me to widen my perspective on the pedagogic challenge that history presents as a school subject.

Throughout the period of my Nehru fellowship, and later while I was still writing, I was assisted by Rosamma Thomas. Her reliable enthusiasm—in reading, finding, organizing, editing—and her trenchant humour enabled me to function with speed and efficiency. I wish to thank her.

I had the privilege of receiving an elaborate commentary on the completed draft of this book from Professor Sumit Sarkar. His insights and suggestions helped me to go through the final round of revisions. I am deeply grateful to him. Needless to say, Professor Sarkar is in no way responsible for the problems some readers might find in my judgement and style.

My mother, Mrs Krishna Kumari, went to school and, later on, taught in Sialkot and Lahore. Her vivid memories of these cities, and her narratives of picketing as a young girl during the Civil Disobedience Movement, seeing Nehru walk a few steps ahead of her in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad), listening to Tagore through a rainy night, and of many other scenes of that kind, made the history of the national movement and Partition come alive for me. I am happy to thank her.

I wish to thank Frances and Sunil, my wife and son, who cheerfully endured and generously participated in this long and overwhelming preoccupation of mine. Sustaining the arduous effort this study implied once it had started, and holding together the hundreds of details it generated,

would have been impossible without the guarantee of being appreciated at home.

Finally, I wish to remember two scholars whose encouragement and insights enriched this study: S. Shukla and Ravinder Kumar. Sadly, they did not live to see its completion.

Krishna Kumar

1

Introduction

Although the focus of this book is rather specific, working on it forced me to relate to a wide range of issues. One normally believes academic research to be an ivory tower exercise, unfazed by changes in the socio-political climate. Trained and accustomed though I am to working in such an environment, the topic of this book made me remarkably susceptible to changes I saw occurring in Indo-Pak relations while I was writing. I started my work in April 1998, and within a month, the tension between India and Pakistan worsened quite radically, following the testing of atomic bombs in Pokhran and Chagai. Why should this tension affect my study, I wondered, at first, for apart from the extraordinary escalation of tension in May that year, there was nothing new about it. And in any case, I recalled, my initial motivation to undertake this study was a response to the hostility and bitterness that had characterized the

Indo-Pak relationship since my childhood. Indeed, the 'relevance' of the study was linked in my mind to the permanent hostility between the two countries. Heightening of tension would make my study even more relevant, I thought, and I tried to feel somewhat excited about it. Sadly, this did not help me to overcome the nagging thought that the modest contribution my study might make towards a better understanding between the two countries may prove to be too little and too late.

My despair arose from two sources. One had to do with the general gloom that prevails in the systems of education in both India and Pakistan. Anyone writing on children's education in either country cannot avoid a certain degree of despondency. India and Pakistan are among the least literate societies in the world. Both have neglected the education of their children in a determined manner, by giving it a low priority. Besides, both countries have a history of unheeded recommendations on how to improve education. These recommendations were made at regular intervals by commissions and committees appointed by their governments. No one writing about education today can ignore this fact. Moreover, the teaching of history—the focus of this study—arouses only political concern in both India and Pakistan. It never translates itself into a concern for the children who are at the receiving end. In systems which neglect even basic areas like literacy and numeracy, who would bother about how well history is taught? This question was crucial for me because I was going to confine myself to the study of textbooks dealing with the freedom movement, a relatively tepid area, compared to ancient and medieval history which have aroused controversies in both countries.

During the course of this study I had the occasion to

visit Lahore. Apart from other institutions, I was able to visit the Central Training College which was established by the British in 1890 as the first major institution responsible for training teachers. After my return, I found that no one in my own institute showed any curiosity about the current state of the institution which had once served as a model for all future teachers' training organizations in India, including our own. This academic apathy, I discovered, extended to all aspects of life in Pakistan, and it was not confined to my institute.

That was the second reason for my despondency. Negative feelings towards Pakistan are, of course, widespread, and I have no doubt that such sentiments are more than matched by anti-India feelings in Pakistan. Hostility between nations usually arouses curiosity, which also serves as an instrument of defence by generating reliable knowledge about the enemy. This is why the US has so many experts on the former Soviet Union. Why hasn't this logic worked for India and Pakistan? Indian scholars who can be considered Pakistan experts are rare; India experts in Pakistan are rarer. Both countries tend to rely on retired diplomats and journalists when they need information about the other. It is usually not knowledge that is sought; opinion suffices to keep the machinery of tension working. But the lack of demand does not explain the absence of academic curiosity in both countries towards the other.

Both countries live with the assumption that they *know* the other. The 'other' is, after all, a former aspect of the 'self'; hence there is no room for the curiosity that foreignness normally awakens. Physical vicinity compounds this feeling. If India and Pakistan were geographically apart, there might have been a chance for the kind of

anxiety that lack of news about a hostile relative residing far away causes. India and Pakistan are politically so far apart and geographically and culturally so close that there is no room for an epistemic space between them. Indians tend to feel that they *know* Pakistan. In seminars, senior participants joyfully intersperse their pre-Partition knowledge with snippets about meeting Pakistani delegates in Paris or New York. There are not many Indian scholars who can discuss Pakistan's economy or politics at any length, with an eye on details and the mode of evolution. Knowledge about Pakistan has little worth in India. And the case of knowledge about India in Pakistan is not very different. There are hardly any scholars there who can read Hindi or any other Indian language. Academic life has greatly shrunk in Pakistan over the recent decades, and what little space there was earlier for scholarly curiosity about India has disappeared. Stigmatization of India as a Hindu country has also aided this process. In general, the power of stereotypes in both countries has proved too strong to allow scope for any serious enquiry and knowledge about each other.

My own experience of studying Pakistan, in order to make sense of the textbooks used there, adds a few nuances to the sketch I have drawn earlier. Colleagues to whom I spoke about this project during the last two years promptly said that my research was highly interesting and important. From the way they said it, I had the disconcerting feeling that 'interesting' really meant strange, and 'important' meant political. People who wanted to know about the issue in some detail assumed that history is taught in a highly twisted fashion in Pakistan, and that *that* is what my study will highlight. When they said that my study was topical, they meant that it will establish beyond doubt that

Pakistan has sowed the seeds of permanent hostility towards India by teaching its younger generations a false version of the past. This kind of assumption about the intention underlying my study was quite disturbing, particularly when it was made by liberal-minded people with intellectual credentials who should know what a comparative study implies.

Despite the despair I felt while I was working on it, the study is here. Basically, it consists of an enquiry into the perceptions of the past that Indian and Pakistani children encounter at school. My specific preoccupation is with education, but I believe it extends to constructing a common basis of enquiry for the two societies. History taught to the young is always a contemporary concern, and for obvious reasons. Every society worries about how its young will think about the past because knowledge of the past has so much to do with attitudes and beliefs that are important for a society's survival. As nation-states, modern societies place a heavy responsibility on the historian who writes for the young. Political leaders and the other elite of newly established nation-states tend to perceive education mainly as a means of imparting a strong sense of national identity to the young. Older nation-states of the West also use education for this purpose, but the pedagogic space available in their systems of education is wider, and it allows other purposes of education to be pursued as well. Nation-building assumes so dominant a position among the aims of children's education in the relatively younger nation-states or post-colonial states that there is little opportunity to pursue its other aims, particularly the aims relevant to intellectual development. The impoverished state of schools and the overwhelming importance attached to examinations contribute to the dilution of these other aims. As a school

subject, history comes under the strain of nation-building rather more than other subjects. A single-minded focus on the goal of inculcating a national consciousness often makes the teaching of history a means of ideological indoctrination. The role of history in arousing an interest in the past and respect for it, besides imparting the means of studying it, gets totally sidelined when the ideology of nationalism becomes the sole ground for organizing historical knowledge in syllabi and textbooks.

In both India and Pakistan, the teaching of history has been a matter of considerable debate, and in that sense history appears to be less neglected compared to the other school subjects. But this impression turns out to be an erroneous one when we consider the nature of the debates that have surrounded the teaching of history. In both countries, the debates have been essentially political, with no pedagogical value or substance. In India, school history has been bogged down by a controversy over the secular versus communal perspectives. The representation of the Middle Ages has been one focus of this controversy; another has been the issue of whether the Aryans were indigenous or outsiders. Though these issues look esoteric, they have a bearing on contemporary political formations and the questions addressed by these formations, particularly the question of how the state treats religious minorities. In Pakistan, controversies surrounding the teaching of history have been more directly political. The nature, and not just the ideological character, of the Pakistani nation-state has been at stake in these controversies. During the regime of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, an official policy to rewrite history for school-children started to take shape; and under Zia-ul-Haq it became one of the numerous initiatives to construct a full-fledged ideological apparatus under the banner of

'Islamization'. Moves of a similar nature are now afoot in India, but we do not know how far they will go, given the volatile phase of governance through which India is passing and the inherent strength that democracy appears to have acquired. The common point to note in the debates on history in both countries is the lack of interest in looking at history syllabi and textbooks from the child's perspective. In the absence of such a perspective, it is hardly surprising that the debating parties have paid no attention whatsoever to how badly history is taught, and how little history teaching engages itself with the child's intellectual development and interest in the past.

Some readers will perhaps be disappointed by my decision to confine this study to the portrayal of the freedom struggle in school textbooks. The controversies I have mentioned continue to be alive in both India and Pakistan, and a full-scale comparison of how the long past of the subcontinent is presented to children in the two countries would undoubtedly arouse great interest. My decision to focus on the freedom struggle is based on two grounds. One has to do with a policy I proposed in my earlier book, *Learning from Conflict*, that we ought to pay greater pedagogic attention to the history of modern India than we do at present.¹ My main argument was that modern history has far greater potential for engaging children in activities connected with the study of social sciences than the history of earlier periods has. They, too, ought to be studied, perhaps with an archaeological orientation, but the modern period, which includes the anti-colonial struggle and the post-independence period, can form an area of wide-ranging investigation. Pedagogically too, it promises children a more convenient use of source material, literature and biography—an important component

of history teaching but a rare practice in both India and Pakistan. By examining the representation of the freedom struggle in the textbooks of the two countries, I hope to establish the potential of the modern period as subject matter for a pedagogically defensible introduction to history during the secondary school years. At present the freedom struggle comes in at the tail-end of a tiring introduction to Indian history during Classes VI, VII and VIII. The present structure of the history curriculum and the dull manner in which textbooks represent history leave the children with little enthusiasm for the subject by the time they are first introduced to the freedom movement towards the second half of the school session in Class VIII.

My other reason to focus on the freedom struggle was that I believed it would promote a better understanding between India and Pakistan by helping readers in both countries to grasp how a common recent past is looked at by the other. Memory of the anti-colonial movement and Partition continues to be a part of the symbolic world that shapes children's socialization. School textbooks are a prominent means by which this knowledge gets transmitted; television and cinema, news and the celebration of politically significant days are among other means. Knowledge of the freedom struggle plays a key role in socializing the younger generation into nationally-upheld attitudes and beliefs. Perhaps we can go farther. By the time a child becomes a young citizen, he or she is *expected* to share the inimical mindset that characterizes political relations between the two countries. It is quite likely that some of the roots of this mindset lie in the nature of the knowledge given to children regarding how the two countries became free and separate. If my study helps in the search of these roots, it will make a small contribution towards better mutual understanding and reconciliation.

Early on, I found to my astonishment that studies of this kind had not been done before. Barring a paper by Avril Powell and another by Navnita Chadha Behera, there had not been any previous attempts at such a comparative study of Indian and Pakistani textbooks.² Further, there was no record of joint attempts made by Indian and Pakistani historians, along the lines of Japanese and South Korean historians, to read and analyse history textbooks.³ While conversing with historians, I felt that an interest of this kind had just not been perceived as being worthy of pursuit. It was perhaps one more example of the Iron Curtain that hangs between the two countries. It discourages any serious desire to know how the other thinks. And it keeps the two countries from building a common pool of knowledge about themselves and the world. Only cable television and the film industry manage to bridge the deep divide, but the fare they offer to the two audiences contributes just as much to peace as it does to enmity and prejudice.

A worry which haunted me from the beginning was whether an Indian could claim to be a balanced and impartial reader of textbooks written for Pakistani children. This apprehension was obviously a part of my larger anxiety to act as a trained comparative researcher. As a method in the social sciences, comparison of two societies along any dimension presents the challenge of comprehending alternative perspectives and practices. When the two societies under comparison have a hostile relationship, and the researcher belongs to one of them, impartiality demands great self-restraint and imagination. Applied in the context of education, the comparative method requires wide-ranging awareness of the cultural and political environment of each society. Acquiring such

an awareness presented a special challenge in the case of this study. Pakistan is a part of the Indian memory. There is a mental block to affording it the status of a proper object of enquiry, given the wistful Indian feeling that Pakistan was, until the other day, a part of 'us'. Pakistan today is as foreign to India as Sri Lanka or Burma. The Buddhist parable about a mature tree not being the same entity that its sapling was, is quite relevant to the common Indian habit of regarding Pakistan as a society too familiar to deserve systematic study.

The sample of textbooks I have examined was drawn mainly to cover the two kinds of schools we find in both India and Pakistan. The gap between these two kinds of schools—'public' and ordinary—is wider in Pakistan than it is in India, and this is reflected in the textbooks used in elite Pakistani schools. Privately published textbooks used in Sind and those published by the pre-eminent textbook board of Punjab are both represented in my sample for Pakistan. It also ensures the coverage of middle and senior secondary level textbooks. Luckily for me, the textbooks used in Urdu medium schools are translations of textbooks written in English or vice versa. Regional variation is also quite narrow in contemporary Pakistan. Since the establishment of a federal curriculum wing in the late 1970s, centralization of syllabus design and textbook writing increased quite rapidly. Use of textbooks for the ideological consolidation of Pakistan was already in practice; it intensified during the Zia regime, and the textbooks written in that phase have remained in the market, with minor modifications and updating. Punjab's status in Pakistani political and economic life is reflected in textbooks as well. This, of course, applies to the state controlled system of education. Textbooks used by elite public schools are richer in content and reflect a wider national space.

The Indian case, and therefore my sample for India, is somewhat different. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) published its history textbooks during the early 1970s, and these have remained in use ever since among schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). Apart from the NCERT textbooks for Classes VIII, X and XII, (the classes in which children study the freedom movement), I included the textbooks published by the state boards of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Bengal and Punjab. These, I thought, would suffice to represent the range of regional variations one might find in the study of the freedom struggle. I also included four privately published textbooks which are used in schools affiliated to the Indian Council of Secondary Education (ICSE). These schools constitute a substantial section of elite 'public' schools, the rest of which are affiliated to the CBSE.

I have taken pains to place my reading of Indian and Pakistani textbooks in two kinds of frames. One is a pedagogic frame, devised with the help of knowledge about children's ways of perceiving the past and about the ethos in which the systems of education function in India and Pakistan. The other frame derives from the study of narration as discourse. As a public narrative, all history can be analysed in terms of the elements of discourse, namely, the narrator, the listener and the story.⁴ Such a scheme of analysis suits history written specifically for the young because it carries the burden of making adjustments to their impressionability and limited awareness. When history takes the form of a textbook, its author addresses a known, implied reader and feels responsible for fulfilling the goals of the system which has given him or her a captive audience.⁵ These dimensions of textbook writing help us

understand why the story of the freedom struggle takes the specific forms it does in India and Pakistan. The textbooks analysed here are read in the context of the educational policies and pedagogical conventions of each country. I have made an attempt to map this larger context of the teaching of history with the help of socio-historical details relevant to the study of education in India and Pakistan.

These methodological concerns and aspects of design are discussed, along with some other broad issues, in the initial part of the book, consisting of four short chapters. It is true that these chapters delay the reader's entry into the comparative analysis which forms the focus of this book, but the delay is necessary in view of the complex interplay of factors shaping the subject. Readers who jump directly to the sixth chapter, where the main study starts, will run the risk of not appreciating the anxieties and motives which led me to undertake this project in the first place. Also, such readers could mistakenly think that my analysis is merely yet another attempt to uncover the politics of history writing. One major objective of this study is to examine the rival ideologies of nationalism into which schools attempt to socialize the young. Another is to probe the politics of history writing as a means to understand the contribution that schooling makes to the Indo-Pak conflict. Not just what is taught in the name of history in a broad sense, but precisely how it is represented in order to design the young mind is the focus. The manner in which children absorb the key arguments used in the design, and what can be done to reorient history writing towards a peaceful future, are discussed in the third part. In place of a conclusion, the final chapter indicates the pedagogic planning needed for making the teaching of history an instrument of peace.

PART I

Challenge of the Past

2

Children and the Past

Long before children have the capacity, and find the opportunities, to make sense of the past, they are socialized into its many legacies. Dispensed as history, knowledge of the past becomes a powerful factor of acculturation. Both in its popular—oral as well as written—versions and the authorized school version, knowledge of the past has a pronounced impact on how great collectivities like nation-states act in the historical present. Representations of the past, dispersed by institutions like schools and the state media, ultimately serve as mental maps which guide large multitudes of people in shaping their responses to present-day situations. Assimilation of this knowledge during childhood takes place through socialization at home and formal learning at school. The first source contributes to the formation of tacit understanding; the other leads to the formation of socially articulated knowledge. Together, they

shape attitudes, beliefs and behaviour during later life.

As a preface to the analysis of history texts used in Indian and Pakistani schools, this chapter examines the psycho-social characteristics of children's response to the past. It draws upon theories concerning socialization and learning in an effort to give the reader a general idea of the cognitive challenge that the teaching of history at school might present to children. We first take a look at the socializing forces that work in early childhood, forming the bedrock of collective attitudes which the school, when it receives the child later, must see as a 'given'. In the next section, we discuss the specific problems that arise, from early adolescence onwards, in the context of learning about the past under the auspices of history as a school subject.

Early Socialization

One can hardly conceptualize a culture which does not store and transmit to the young, a collective memory. Indeed, as Durkheim suggested, no culture can survive for long without performing these tasks with vigour.¹ A good deal of the collective memory is stored and transmitted to the young as tacit knowledge, as a part of their early upbringing or 'primary socialization'. In this form, knowledge concerning the past is passed on to the young in ways finely interwoven in everyday adult-child dialogue. The other kinds include knowledge of ritual, language, appropriate behaviour, and so on. Knowledge about the past is also woven into rituals observed in the family and community, as well as in language and modes of worship. Tacit knowledge about the past of one's family and community is not open to rational enquiry or questioning. Indeed, there is no expectation of 'understanding' as such.

As an inheritance, the past requires the young to submerge themselves in it, in the sense that they would learn to incorporate its categories in their own linguistic, emotional and ethical behaviour. In this sense, the past can be aptly likened to a body of water; whether one chooses to go into its depth or not, the depth is there.

The past, as this metaphor might indicate, cannot be broken up or classified into temporal categories, such as the ones historians offer us for holding the past as articulate knowledge. When the child is socialized into tacit knowledge of the collective past, the effect leaves no possibility of being reflected on or analysed. Far from being ordered or organized into a calendar, the past is transmuted into a bunch of salient events, pleasant as well as painful, woven around images of places and personalities which are necessarily larger than life. The events stored in this fashion may well feature a random mix of religious mythology and history, including pre-history. Great battles won and lost, famines, migrations and celebrations are stored in this indiscriminate stock of memory which the child inherits in the course of socialization in the family. The means of communication used by the family may include articulate media like story-telling or conversations, but the residue they form in the child's memory is necessarily a quietly held stock of knowledge.

This stock of knowledge can be classified into two sets of holdings; one consists of *images*, and the other of *attitudes and rules* of behaviour. The images pertain to events and personages or actors to which the child's social milieu assigns significance. This broad characterization of images would cover those which have their origins in religious history, myth and the rituals of community life. Thus, the image of a newborn baby being carried across a

river in spate or a spider protecting a cave may become a part of the child's inherited memory as much as the image of a queen riding a horse, dressed in a man's attire. Images of this kind may be derived from stories told by parents or other adults and may include the ones being projected from a television screen. Subsequent additions to these images may be made by community events involving a display of icons in a street procession, drama or decorations in a place of worship. When we say in an everyday sense that these images are 'deep rooted', we mean that they are the substance of the identity the child develops in the course of his or her interaction with senior members of the family who are part of a religio-cultural community.

The other part of the tacit stock of knowledge consists of attitudes that the immediate and extended family and the community regard as being appropriate. These attitudes are necessarily grounded in the texture of relationships that the community forms with groups it regards as the 'other'. The chances of such attitudes acting as ground rules of expected behaviour are particularly high in societies with a multi-ethnic composition, allowing space for several pasts to be held together in a complex pattern. This description eminently suits Indian society with its multi-religious and caste-based composition. To be socialized in such a society involves precise notions of the 'other' whose memory stock of images and appropriate attitudes are distinctly different.²

The child's primary socialization, which occurs within the structure of relationships forming the immediate family, entails the birth of a notion of the self as a member of society. This symbolic rebirth, as distinct from the physical birth, is a complex and prolonged outcome of routine interactions between the growing child and his or her

immediate others. Language, as a repository of shared values, perceptions and ways of negotiating the daily world, acts as a prime medium of this interaction. It also acts as a highly dynamic distributor of common knowledge that the adult society—of which the child's parents are members—take for granted as its wisdom. The child receives this knowledge without any possibility of interpreting or questioning it. As Berger and Luckmann put it, 'although the child is not simply passive in the process of his socialization, it is the adults who set the rules of the game'.³ The knowledge that the child receives in the course of primary socialization includes role-related behaviours (e.g., behaviours considered appropriate for a boy or a girl) as well as generalized behaviours. It also includes attitudes, perceptions and values underlying behaviours deemed to be appropriate.

The knowledge imparted by adults in the course of their interaction with the child constructs a symbolic reality which the child negotiates and lives in. This reality is necessarily selective. Only the crucial or most salient aspects of organized society are conveyed. Memory of the social past is one such segment. It is conveyed, not as a detailed record of events, but rather as a body of recollections sedimented in the society's lore. Individual adult memories are accommodated in a common, shared past, featuring a complex intermeshing of biography, heritage, and myth. Long before children have the means to reflect on reality in an interpretative manner, they are socialized into a world that has a continuity infinitely longer than their own lives. This infinite continuity has an identity-giving power inasmuch as it answers the question, 'Where did I come from?' Since the upbringing of children responds in a powerful, decisive manner to this question,

childhood can be said to have an all-embracing, immersion role to play in the formation of personality.

By the time the child goes to school, she has already acquired the basic, deeper imprint that membership of a society, as an outcome of primary socialization, implies. The school has no choice but to work with the child's personality thus formed. The challenge for those involved in the child's schooling as policy-makers, curriculum designers, writers of textbooks and, of course, teachers lies in enabling the child to extend the socialized self in a reasoned and coherent manner. In practical terms, it means how best they can equip the child with the intellectual wherewithal to consciously reflect on the socialized self even as this self interacts with the objective world.

Learning At School

Modern national systems of education in most countries may, in principle or on paper, be committed to developing children's intellectual means but in practice, the education imparted in schools rarely gives a child the opportunity and the intellectual means to reflect on his or her socialized self. Generally, these systems of education are oriented towards cultivating the characteristics of loyal citizens in children, in preference to the development of their intellectual or contemplative capacities. As far as teaching about the past is concerned, schools in different systems perform the job of socializing the young into an approved national past, the approving agency being the state.⁴ As an agency of secondary socialization—as distinguished from primary socialization accomplished in the family—the school uses the officially approved knowledge of the nation's past to inspire and prepare children for fulfilling the roles

expected of them as obedient citizens. Depending on the circumstances prevailing in a country, these roles may range from acting as a law-abiding citizen in everyday life to being prepared to fight for one's country in the event of a war.

In order to look at the school's role more closely, we need to make a distinction between the *knowledge* of past events and the *awareness* that these events pertain to specifiable phases of the past. In the first sense, knowledge of the past is like any other information, in that it can be held in memory without the concepts required to make sense of it. Thus, a child of six may tell us that India won its freedom from British rule on 15 August 1947, without a grasp of what 'British rule' or freedom from it might mean. The awareness that there is a past dimension to present-day reality is quite different from the possession of this kind of information. Also, the awareness that the past is a body of time that can be measured and rationally organized may not always accompany the knowledge of past events.

Children may need at least some information about past events in order to develop an awareness concerning their pastness. This is because the past dimension of things is not open to a child's exploratory instincts as are the other dimensions, such as the physical or mechanical properties and uses of things. Children can figure out how an old clock works by peeping inside it, but they cannot figure out by any means other than by being told that the clock was bought by someone's grandfather when the mother was eight years old. The past story of an object is a matter of representation: children become aware of it in the course of interaction, rather than by detecting it on their own. In a rudimentary sense, there may be some

possibility of guessing and discovering it, for instance, by noticing that an object looks old. That the appearance of age conceals a full-scale story, so to say, is an awareness that must await the opportunity of the child meeting someone who knows that story and chooses to tell it. This is why children depend on adults to learn that there is a past, and also, to learn what it consisted of. Later on, they may develop the ability, if they get the opportunity, to explore the past themselves.⁵

Piaget's theory concerning children's intellectual development, and his general theory of knowledge, can offer us valuable help in recognizing the challenges that learning about the past presents to children. The broad inferences we can draw from his work and from that of his critics are relevant to the issues raised here.⁶ Piaget's theory tells us that children's ability to think logically develops in the course of experiences they encounter or, rather, *construct* in informal ways. Teaching has no direct role to play in this process, except by way of extending the scope of the child's experiences. The theory suggests that teaching this or that subject depends for its success on our appreciation of the logical framework that children apply in order to reconstruct what we say or do in their own mental worlds. Another point we can derive from Piaget's theory is that development is a comprehensive phenomenon, which means that the ability to think in increasingly logical ways has a pervasive influence on the learning required in different areas of the curriculum. We learn from Piaget how slow, long and maturation-bound the development of logical thinking remains throughout childhood and adolescence. We are somewhat startled when we hear his claim about young children's difficulties with problems requiring transitive inferences, appreciation of invariance, reversibility

and simultaneity.⁷ These are some of the key attainments marked out in Piaget's portrayal of the long and intrinsically-driven journey that children undertake as they grow up. These attainments are of crucial significance for children's grasp of school knowledge, though terms like 'grasp' may not mean the same thing to teachers of different subjects. Ultimately, the child's intellectual development is aimed towards the ability to deal with abstractions, freed from the world of concrete objects and context-tied meanings. Such a liberation of the child's mind occurs, according to Piaget's theory, in adolescence, though at that time a number of new quasi-emotional challenges face the intellectually well-equipped child. It is towards the end of adolescence that a young person develops a truly dependable apparatus for constructing knowledge in logical ways. Studies have shown that the advantage of, what Piaget calls, 'formal' thinking that the adolescent may have in school subjects like science and mathematics may accrue much later—perhaps later than in all other subjects—in the learning of history.⁸

It is the content of our knowledge of the past that we think of when we say that we know what the past was like. However, as the distinction made a little earlier shows, it is one thing to have some knowledge of *what* might have happened in the past, quite another to know that it happened in the past at a certain point of time and under a given set of circumstances. The content of one's knowledge of the past must be accompanied by an awareness of time in order to qualify as historical knowledge. The ability to grasp abstractions, the concept of probability, and linguistic competence in reasoning are related to the maturation of the sense of time. Children who have not developed these abilities in any substantial sense may well

form an idea of past events and the persons involved in them, but their idea cannot qualify as historical understanding.

Among the criteria for defining historical understanding, the foremost would surely be the awareness that an event which occurred in the past requires us to appreciate the circumstances, values and choices that shaped the actions of the people who were involved in it. Since a past event cannot be re-enacted, we must imagine it, or rather reconstruct it as best as we can, with whatever evidence we may have access to. Usually, such evidence is limited, and its adequacy as a basis for interpretation is subject to debate among historians. Historical understanding demands that as readers of history we appreciate such debates; which means that we know why a past event permits those who study it professionally only a limited degree of certitude in describing or interpreting it. Thus, to make historical sense of the past implies some understanding of the historian's job. Without such an understanding, a reader of history cannot be said to know how the study of the past differs from the study of the present.⁹

Secondly, an understanding of history requires the basic ability to make sense of a text which freely uses concepts and ideas from other areas of social inquiry, such as political science, sociology, and psychology. History deals with society, with how it worked in older times; it also deals with the succession of events which both marked and caused changes in the way people lived then. Understandably, historians use the terms of inquiry which have a general value for the study of society, including the study of present-day society. Along with a basic awareness that an event occurred in times different from the present, history demands from us the ability to notice the use of

common terms like 'order', 'rule', 'conflict' and 'power' in the context of a specific set of circumstances which prevailed in the past. A reader of history should be capable of considerable flexibility in attributing a relevant meaning to such terms.

Thirdly, a challenging psychological demand that historical understanding makes from us is to notice an event and the people involved in it, both in terms of its outcome and, at the same time, without being completely guided by the outcome. This idea is a bit paradoxical, so it needs to be explained and illustrated. What impact an event or a course of events has on subsequent times is of great interest to historians. They are, after all, concerned with the succession of occurrences, not just in an occurrence by itself. Yet, if historians looked at an event solely from the point of view of its outcome, they can hardly comprehend and appreciate the perspective and motivation of the people who were involved in the event but who did not know what the ultimate outcome of their actions would be. A reasonable understanding of the causes that impelled historical personalities or the purpose they were working for demand from us the ability to take their perspective into account. This is different from feeling an empathy which may, in fact, restrain historical understanding or turn it into a vicarious experience of the kind fiction provides. History demands the capacity to enter into a time-frame and perspective without being submerged in it.¹⁰

A useful example can be derived from the political happenings of the years preceding India's Partition. The Partition did eventually occur, and our awareness of this fact colours our view of the leaders who were engaged in the politics of pre-Partition days, either trying to avoid it

or trying to make it happen. To understand and to explain historically why Partition took place requires that we are able to see the happenings preceding it without imposing on them our knowledge of the fact that Partition did occur and also our knowledge of the cost it incurred, not to mention the cost that it continues to incur. No application of this ability can be perfect; it cannot be, for there is no way we can jettison our knowledge of Partition as an event that took a terrible shape. However, the effort to construct pre-Partition politics and other developments without being influenced by our awareness of what eventually happened is essential for a proper understanding of pre-Partition history.

The representation of history at school as a long record of the past may present to the young essentially the same kind of cognitive challenges that they face in other areas of the curriculum, but perhaps these challenges take a relatively more complex form in history. As a subject at school, history comes across as a record of salient events which have a dual face. Each major event is presented as an outcome of the ones preceding it and, at the same time, constituting the cause or source of what followed it. Appreciation of a chain of events implies that the student is able to perceive both aspects of an event. Such a perception involves a fully developed capacity for what Piaget calls reversibility. It consists of the ability to notice the differences between two or more objects which are similar in certain basic respects. Reversibility implies the recognition that one can study the differences while holding the similarities in mind as a point one can 'return' to. Among the abilities discussed above in the context of historical understanding, a high degree of reversibility is necessarily implied. For instance, it is implicit in the

requirement that as readers of history, we should not allow our analysis and judgement to be coloured by our knowledge of outcomes. Though one normally associates the development of reversibility with the age-range covered by the elementary school years, this association is rather narrowly rooted in children's learning of mathematics. Verbally represented problems involving human situations, such as the ones confronted in the study of literature and history, may require greater maturation and specifically organized opportunities to be resolved with the help of reversibility and other capacities linked to the development of reasoning.

The development of historical understanding, in the sense defined earlier, is a valid pedagogic aim for the teaching of history although the school syllabi and textbooks may not necessarily be organized with this aim in view. In the comparative study of textbooks used in India and Pakistan presented later, the foregoing discussion of historical understanding will be used as a source of criteria for commenting on texts from the child's point of view. Let us conclude this discussion by reminding ourselves what challenges the teaching of history at school may present to children. There are two kinds of challenges, the first of which arises from the knowledge of the past that children acquire as part of their socialization at home. This knowledge includes beliefs and attitudes inherited from the past by communities and families. Some of the beliefs and attitudes may come in conflict with the ones upheld by the school, and the problems arising from this conflict may be compounded by the school's refusal to recognize the knowledge of the past implicit in the child's socialization. The second kind of challenges are related to the extent to which the teaching of history at school attunes itself to the

child's cognitive capacity to make sense of history. If the design of syllabi and the content of textbooks overlook the developmental aspects of cognition, the consequences may be graver than boredom with the subject or poor performance in an examination. The teaching of history as a vehicle for the dispersal of officially approved information about the past can hardly qualify to be called a purely educational enterprise.

3

Frames of Popular Perception

The history of the freedom struggle taught to school-children in India and Pakistan is framed by a deep awareness of the 'other'. In both cases, the sense of what happened in the past is intertwined with the current and evolving perception of the 'other'. This applies to older history as well, but is particularly true of the teaching of the freedom struggle. Pakistan was born as a result of Partition which accompanied the end of the freedom struggle. On the other hand, India's identity as a secular country has its foundation in the resistance shown by India's greatest freedom fighters to the idea of Partition. This difference may constitute a sufficient reason for the pedagogic narratives of freedom in both countries to be greatly influenced by perceptions of the 'other', but there is another, equally strong reason. This has to do with the fact that the concept of 'freedom' is an unfinished or ongoing narrative in both countries, as

indeed it is in all once-colonized countries. The label, 'developing countries', which is commonly applied to former colonies, is true in a literal sense in that their stories of independence are still developing or unfolding.

The struggle against British imperial power continues to be used as a source of inspiration for progress in both India and Pakistan. Any number of examples can be given to substantiate this. The two I found among advertisements celebrating Independence Day a year ago should suffice. A half-page advertisement in Indian newspapers showed four similar looking icons from history. The first three showed a soldier's helmet and a sword. The three swords were somewhat different, each successive one looking a little more advanced. The first figure represents the battle of Plassey where Sirajuddaula fought the British in 1757 and lost. The second represents the fourth Mysore war, marking the defeat of Tipu Sultan, and the third represents Rani Lakshmi Bai's defeat in 1857. The fourth icon shows a helmet with a rifle, and the caption says: 'Today, defeats are history.' This advertisement of the Indian Ordnance Factory carries the following message at the bottom:

Losing our independence to the British was a sad chapter in our country's history. And regaining it wasn't easy. All the more reason why we are determined to guard it zealously. And why we make sure the arms and ammunition that we manufacture in our Ordnance Factories are fail-safe and dependable. So that, history never repeats itself.

By placing India's defence preparedness today in the historical context of the British conquest, the advertisement semiotically extends the story of the freedom struggle. It

does so unobtrusively, by means of careful graphic crafting. The newspaper reader, who is the intended viewer of the advertisement, may not notice what is happening. Beneath the general point about the consistent growth of India's military might lurks the message that present-day conflict with neighbours is similar to the threat that European colonizers once posed to India's freedom.

Independence Day advertisements in a popular Pakistani news monthly provide parallel examples of the psychological continuation of the freedom struggle. The character and the precise content of these advertisements are different, but the message is similar to the one in the Indian advertisement. For instance, an advertisement in *The Herald*, (August 2000) of NADRA,¹ an agency of the Ministry of Interior involved in documenting Pakistan's population, says that it is 'implementing the highest ideal'. Below this claim is set a photograph of Jinnah and his 14 August 1948 message:

Pakistan's honour, defence and survival lay in its ability to stay united and integrated. You have only one goal to pursue—to be united and coherent as a nation on every front.

Another advertisement in the same issue of the magazine, given by a cement company, says:

Quaid-e-Azam had a dream for the Muslims of the sub-continent. Our aim is to build a stronger Pakistan in the global community.

Thus, the Pakistan Movement continues to provide not just an inspiration but also the content of the text of progress.

The use of Jinnah's or, in the case of India, Gandhi's

image as a reminder of the unfinished business of the freedom movement is part of a wider tendency which we see in both countries. They are treated as reminders not just of history, but of a project that started with the freedom movement. This nation-building project has very different connotations in the two countries. The difference arises partly out of the intrinsic associations that the historical memory of the freedom struggle has in each society. The other source of the difference is the use made of the perception of the 'other' in the continued story of the freedom struggle. Later, we will examine the representation of the freedom struggle in Indian and Pakistani school textbooks in comparative detail. That discussion will naturally focus on the ways in which the nation-building ideology of each country shapes its story of the past. At present, I wish to focus on the interlocked frames of perception that are used in India and Pakistan to refer to their own national identity by hinting at the 'other'. I find it necessary to present this discussion as a background to my main study because the details of textbook history make so much more sense when seen in the light of ongoing identity-building processes. In any case, history written for children cannot be isolated from these contemporary frames, because teaching the young by itself symbolizes the nation-building process.

In any relationship characterized by conflict, each side tends to define the other in sharp contrast to itself. This is quite true of the Indo-Pak relationship, except that the internal complexities of the two societies do not fully permit us to refer to them as two distinct 'sides' involved in a conflict. Each side has something of the other *in* it. There are many contexts internal to the two countries which influence their perception of the 'other', allowing it

either a strongly hostile or a weakly friendly articulation under different political and cultural climates. For India, the presence of a large Muslim population—larger than Pakistan itself—serves a dual symbolic role. As evidence of India's pluralism, it 'proves' that the creation of Pakistan was superfluous. In contrast to this hostile discourse, a friendly discourse uses the Muslim population as a cultural, even diplomatic bridge—for example, in the context of the introduction of a daily bus service between Delhi and Lahore—to Pakistan. In Pakistan, no effort is spared to highlight India's 'foreignness' in terms of religion and culture. Yet, almost a daily need is felt to talk about Indian cities from where one's ancestors came, where relatives still live, and where some of the greatest monuments of Islamic glory are to be found.

Thus, each country presents a strong case of dependence on the other for defining itself. There is a widespread feeling in India that such a tendency is exclusive to Pakistan, given the fact that Pakistan has had to invent a national identity, not once but twice—once, after birth, and then again following the emergence of Bangladesh as a separate country. By comparison, identity-building appears to have been a relatively smoother process for India, despite problems arising out of its size and the hardships involved in democratic governance. The argument that India finds in Pakistan a resource for defining itself may, therefore, sound nonsensical. There are differences in the manner in which the two countries use each other to define themselves, and their need to do so may be of a different order, but in the following pages I wish to argue that both use the other.

To probe this highly complex theme, we can start by differentiating between the official self-perception of the two countries and popular perceptions. The latter expectedly

vary greatly, depending on the region, the generation and the background of the people concerned. The following discussion of popular Indian perceptions is based on my experience as a teacher of university students and an observer of school-children. One of my major, annually repeated, experiences has to do with the difficulty that the concept of secularism presents to students. Inevitably, the concept of secularism comes in for aggressive questioning year after year. The official significance attached to it is subjected to serious doubt; indeed, the policy is accused of lack of sincerity, not just sense. It is viewed with suspicion, as 'politics'. And this view is not confined to a fringe element in the student body I face.

The time-frame and the circumstances in which this view has been articulated need some clarification. Secularism was included as a topic in the syllabus of educational philosophy in my institute in the late 1980s. By then, the proverbial middle-of-the-road politics of the Congress had started curving rightward, even as the traditional right was preparing the popular imagination for radical measures against official secularism. The rise of religio-terrorism in Punjab served as a grim backdrop against which civil society witnessed the state's speedy accommodation of the voices of religious revivalism. Hindu communalism not only gathered momentum and aggressiveness, but also respectability. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement provided an impetus to these trends, ultimately leading to the outbreak of widespread communal violence at the end of 1992. During the remaining years of the 1990s, the erosion of secular institutions continued even as educational policy came under strong pressure to accommodate the ideology of religious revivalism. This thumb-nail sketch of the last two decades should suffice as a basis for the point that

many of the students whom I taught during this period were negotiating a substantial transformation of the Indian state and the urban social ethos. The questions they raised on the official policy of secularism often reflected the debates featured in the press and on television.

A remarkable and frequent line of questioning pursued by my students wonders that if Pakistan is an Islamic state, how can India be a secular state? The logic of this question is purely arithmetical, namely, if Muslims broke India in 1947 to establish their own nation, surely what was left must be a primarily Hindu country. This neat conclusion does not allow the presence of a substantial Muslim population in India to be used as a sufficient reason for reconsideration. The point that India is a pluralist society, structurally in favour of religio-cultural diversity, finds appreciation only among a limited few of my university-level students. Many instinctively refer to Pakistan, saying that if India were truly pluralist, there would be no need for Pakistan. This fundamental position enables them to ask why India cannot be described as a country of the Hindus when Pakistan openly calls itself a home of the Muslims. Thus, they come back to the original doubt—that secularism is a rhetorical device to win a political game. The name of the game, they say, is ‘vote banks’.

Undoubtedly, this kind of argument is partly a reflection of the general cynicism that educated youth feel towards politicians. The institution of elections has been seriously discredited in the eyes of the educated youth. Though disenchantment with politics is articulated in sharper terms by those who have attended English-medium schools, it is a general phenomenon. Young people use their awareness of ‘vote banks’ to debunk the value-foundations of the state, including secularism. Such extended use of the ‘vote

banks' theory has other implications as well. Just as the vote bank of the Muslim minority requires the policy of secularism to cover it, the vote bank of the lower-caste population requires the high-sounding policy of social justice to hide it—so goes a popular argument. Indeed, one may well wonder which state policy the educated youth of the urban middle class detest more—secularism or reservation? To a certain extent, such sweeping questioning of fundamental state values may be a reflection of the generally conservative environment of urban middle-class homes. One can also accept that uncertainties related to career and income have contributed substantially to the negative attitude of urban educated youth, the majority of whom come from upper-caste backgrounds. However, their response to secularism is a more complex issue. An argument which I will discuss now shows that we ought to see the questioning of secularism by the young as part of a deeper cultural phenomenon, related to the concept of India's freedom.

The argument is that Independence in 1947 meant an end to all kinds of foreign rule, not just British rule; therefore, India is now free to be Hindu. On the surface, this argument does not use Partition or Pakistan to justify a Hindu identity for India as opposed to a secular identity, but if we consider it carefully, we find that the argument upholds India as a Hindu country on the ground that India has a long pre-Muslim heritage. Before we probe the argument any further, let us remind ourselves that we are probing a position taken by college-educated youth, not necessarily indoctrinated by Hindu revivalist organizations associated with the so-called 'Sangh Parivar'. Of course, I cannot rule out the possibility that some of the youth whose views I have had the opportunity to know first-

hand were exposed in some manner to the views propagated through different media by Hindu revivalist organizations. That may be so, but the kind of arguments that liberal-minded analysts have been accustomed to labelling as the discourse of Hindu communalism is, in fact, a far more widespread one. It extends not merely to young people whose ideological inclinations are not yet fully formed, but also to members and leaders of the very parties regarded as being committed to India's pluralist ideal. The point is not, of course, new: a communal lobby always existed within the Congress, encircling its progressive outlook with conservative demands. As a passionate supporter of one such demand, voiced in the context of the Somnath temple soon after Independence, K.M. Munshi, Union minister of food and agriculture in the early 1950s, wrote that the national urge for Somnath's resurrection was reflected 'when Sardar (Patel), with uncanny insight, saw that we would never genuinely feel that freedom had come, nor develop faith in our future, unless Somnath was restored'.²

The idea of freedom which Munshi was articulating is anchored in the perception of the medieval ages as a period of India's enslavement by Islam. Progressive historiography has made a valiant effort to disaggregate the notion of a cohesive or monolithic medieval period, but the notion persists. To a certain extent, it draws sustenance from a general unwillingness to engage with what Satish Saberwal calls the 'medieval encounter'. Criticizing the denial of categories like Hindu and Muslim, Saberwal emphasizes the need to study relations between the two in the context of the growth of the social framework, particularly the expansion of metropolitan centres, during the nineteenth century. Suggesting a range of sources for enquiry, he says that the rise of communalism during the colonial period

should perhaps be seen in relation to the long-standing separateness of religious networks, the acute social distance expressing a high level of social antagonism between Muslims and Hindus, the lapse of formerly functioning, integrative political and administrative ties, and the growth of communally homogeneous neighbourhoods in the new metropolitan centres.³ He suggests that these separative social and religious patterns of life found a place in 'primary socialization'— i.e. norms of upbringing in early childhood— and by that route, they gained entry into the social unconscious. Sudhir Kakar makes a similar point when he describes cases of Hindu patients allegedly possessed by a Muslim *bhuta*. The incidence of such cases, Kakar says, shows that 'the Muslim seems to be *the* symbolic, representation of the alien in the Hindu unconscious'.⁴

Saberwal and Kakar are talking about a perceptual reality to which the discourse of secularism has done its best to stay indifferent. The policy of indifference may have had its advantages too, but it has allowed both Hindu and Muslim versions of cultural separation to stay in business. With reference to Pakistan, the secular voice has remained quite feeble and indistinct from its critics, for both, the word 'Pakistan' continues to carry a disruptive connotation, succinctly exemplified in the title of a recent novel by the renowned progressive Hindi novelist, Kamleshwar: '*Kitney Pakistan?*'—'How many Pakistans?' This deeply negative symbolic meaning of 'Pakistan' is commonly reflected in the parlance of college-going youth regarding the present-day Indo-Pak relationship. It also frequently spills into their critique of secularism. They inevitably refer to either Pakistan or to Muslims in any discussion of India's national identity. Any reference to Pakistan or Muslims impels them to take a position close

to, if not identical with, the Hindu revivalist critique of secularism. It means little to them if we suggest that the choices Pakistan has made in order to become a certain kind of nation should not matter to us, or that India has every freedom to define itself the way it likes. Such a suggestion is countered with the question I have already mentioned, i.e. why was Pakistan required at all if India was a pluralist society and was going to remain one. The fact that India was divided on religious grounds serves as a hard historical fact in this debate. It is applied in various ways at different points. For instance, in a discussion held in an English-medium public school on whether state funds should be used to preserve Ghalib's haveli, those against it said that the haveli would have qualified for state funds if it were in Lahore.

It appears from such debates that many students today find something extremely puzzling in the historical preference exercised by Indian nationalist leaders in favour of a secular policy. Some of their difficulties can be attributed to the inadequacies of the education system. The absence of opportunities to freely discuss sensitive issues like communal hostility is quite obvious. Poor organization of knowledge in the history syllabus and texts is also a relevant problem; this book will provide ample proof of that. These and other familiar weaknesses of the educational system contribute to the hardening of the negative mindset which has its foundation in the character of the relationship that India and Pakistan have established between themselves as two nation states. They have chosen to stay interlocked in a web of unresolved instincts, memories and images.

Images and words commonly used in the media, both in the press and television, corroborate this observation. 'Threat from within' has been a favourite theme of Bombay

cinema for a long time. It has been a staple item in numerous films where a character conspires against India's national interests by collaborating with India's enemies.⁵ In several recent films this old theme of conspiracy has been used with pointed references to Pakistan. Filled with scenes of violence, these films have been watched as credible representations of militancy supported by Pakistan in Kashmir. Discussions on radio and letters to newspaper editors tirelessly reinforce the popular theory that Pakistan wants to dismember India. The handy logic upholding the theory is that Pakistan wants to avenge its own dismemberment which occurred in 1971 as a result of India's intervention. The somewhat deeper logic sustaining the theory of Pakistan's evil design is based on Partition. According to this, the Muslims have already dismembered India once, and will not mind doing so again.

Let us now move over to the Pakistani side of this symbolic battle. When I started this study, I believed as many Indians do that there may not be much difference between the official and the popular self-images of Pakistan. The word 'Pakistan' conveyed to me both its state and its people, and therefore the common media reports with sentences starting with 'Pakistan has intensified its anti-India propaganda', carried for me a flat, undifferentiated meaning. Constructing a human face of Pakistan proved a major epistemic challenge for my preparation for this study. Exposure to Pakistan's domestic debates since Independence and its literature, particularly fiction, gave valuable help. Perhaps more than any other literary work, Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided*, prepared me to recognize that there was a Pakistani view we Indians may not have the epistemic means to fathom.⁶ Written before Partition, this book draws the political contours of a

widening gap between Hindus and Muslims of northern India during the 1930s. The artless brilliance of the young writer, who died soon after Partition, compels us to question the knowledge of pre-Partition India we find in history books. Also, we have been used to seeing history mainly from the male point of view. This book dwells mainly on the lives of women, particularly young women. It enables us to view the late 1930s—a period of rapid and significant political changes—in the everyday setting of a politicized Muslim family with three daughters.

An opportunity to organize my academic and literary preparation around a real-life experience came my way during a visit to Lahore which I have mentioned in the Introduction. In this brief and probably quite unrepresentative exposure to life in Pakistan, I was able to converse with several people involved in education, and in two instances I spoke to school and college students.⁷ This experience served as a precious supplement to the academic preparation I had made for this study by reading extensively on Pakistan's politics, economy and society.⁸ I am aware that for a country as big and varied as Pakistan, a single personal exposure cannot be regarded as a sufficient basis for talking about people's perceptions. Indeed, no amount of exposure would have given me ideas and experiences comparable to what I have used in the preceding pages for discussing the perceptions of my young Indian students about India. Given the conditions and the nature of the problem between the two countries, I had to be content with whatever little I could gather of how young Pakistanis and others feel about their country. Of course, I had access to some documentary sources too, such as magazines available in Delhi's libraries and discussions on television. However, my direct knowledge of the way Pakistan's

youngsters think remained quite limited.

India is a looming presence in their minds, and it arouses a remarkable range of feelings, among which a sense of threat and insecurity are paramount. Pakistan, with all its turmoil and visible violence, comes across in children's perception as a protected ground under grave peril. Young students in Pakistan have no direct memory of Partition, and the memories they are given in the course of their education and upbringing are sketchy and remote. It would be correct to say that education has succeeded in dissociating Partition from its painful, violent reality, and has turned it into an achievement for all Pakistanis as, indeed, it was for Jinnah. Maybe it is different in provinces other than Punjab, which has vivid memories of Partition, but we should not underestimate the capacity that modern systems of education—especially when they are highly centralized—have of dispersing knowledge. It is to this dispersal effect of education that I attribute the high awareness of Pakistan's rural poverty and other economic problems which I found among Lahore's young people. Young Pakistanis also seem acutely aware of their country's difficulties as an economically and militarily weaker neighbour of India. The capacity India has to overpower Pakistan seems to have for them a meaning far more vivid and physical than military or financial statistics can ever have. That India does not accept Pakistan's existence and that Pakistan poses no real challenge for India are two sides of the same emotion. It is an emotion that arouses insecurity and impulsively justifies any degree of preparedness.

India's nuclear blasts of May 1998 were answered by Pakistan's blasts the same month. This 'exchange' of blasts was referred to by the students I met as evidence that India wanted to finish Pakistan and that Pakistan was prepared

for survival. One of the arguments used for justifying the Pakistani response was that Islam advises Man to acquire the same power that an enemy might possess. A common script underlying many commentaries made in the press on the nuclear 'exchange' was that Pakistan had to be prepared for any eventuality because India had never accepted Pakistan. A reference to Kashmir was made by some of my respondents who said that India had 'cheated' Pakistan on Kashmir in 1947. If Kashmir's population is mainly Muslim, why should it not belong to Pakistan, they asked, applying the logic which had formed the basis of Partition. They seemed puzzled to hear the question my Muslim colleague travelling with me asked: 'What about the rest of the Muslims in India? Why don't you want them too?'

India's military might, especially India's nuclear capacity, is perceived in Pakistan as being obviously meant for use against Pakistan. Although India does not receive all that much space in the Pakistani press, it casts a substantial shadow on the public space. Since the early 1970s, a conscious effort seems to have been made, both by successive governments and the intelligentsia, to displace India from the inner chamber of Pakistan's self-awareness.⁹ This effort has resulted in a perceptible decline in publicly available knowledge about India, though interest has remained high. Pakistan's post-1971 policy of attaching itself to West Asia, as opposed to South Asia, has had mixed success. In economy, it has made an impact, but in international relations, it has seldom proved to be more than a posture. What has been more successful in nudging Pakistan's daily awareness away from India is the density of the global network its emigrant citizenry has formed. The westernization of Pakistan's elite is just as glaring and pervasive as that of their Indian counterparts. However,

vaster economic inequality and the absence of a stable democratic machinery enable the Pakistani elite to live a life of greater insulated splendour than their Indian counterparts. Children of the elite have reason to feel greater connectedness with the US and Europe than with India, the land of their ancestral ties. 'Islamization' has made little difference to them. Children who attend government schools, and who receive a far bigger and stiffer dose of religio-nationalist indoctrination, apparently live in a different world.

National self-awareness in Pakistan has proved to be a highly volatile issue over the half century of its existence. The self-confidence and determination of the early years are seldom in evidence now, except perhaps in advertisements. One looks in vain at the news media or literature to find an articulation of a state of well-being. What one finds instead is a persistently bleak commentary on material and political conditions. The state of Pakistan's national economy, the frequent disruptions in democratic governance, and incidence of sectarian and other forms of violence are among the prominent factors contributing to the depressive mood one notices in the English press.¹⁰ Depression is also a response to the general uncertainty of civic life and fluctuations in the economy. In the recent past, Pakistan's urban middle class has suffered a sizeable loss of income and decline in its standard of living after the end of the US-backed project to use Pakistan as a conduit for countering the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Although both India and Pakistan use the theme of freedom and national defence as a means of political socialization of the young into a patriotic frame of mind, the effort is made more explicitly and intensively in Pakistan. Pakistani textbooks are replete with references to the 1965

and 1971 wars with India. In India, these wars have been the theme of a number of blockbuster films, but we rarely find stories related to them in textbooks. Pakistani school textbooks, on the contrary, use these wars to construct precise knowledge and imagery of battles and heroes. The same applies to war memorial days. For some years now, India has been celebrating 16 December as Vijay Diwas (Victory Day) to commemorate the surrender of the Pakistani army in what is now Bangladesh. The celebration is confined to state advertisements in the press and public functions staged by the armed forces. In Pakistan, on the other hand, the celebration of 6 September as Defence Day—in memory of the 1965 war—has a larger appeal. In an editorial comment on the importance of 6 September, *Young Nation*, a youth supplement published by the liberal *Friday Times* of Lahore, wrote:

It tells an epic tale of our soldiers who being a very small number compared to the Indian and having very little ammunition, weapons and machinery, fought with such spirit, bravery and courage that it stunned the Indian forces, and of the unity of our people whose only goal was to protect Pakistan.

In the same issue, the magazine carried a small sample of its young readers' views on Defence Day. A nine-year-old wrote that it has a very significant meaning for all of Pakistan:

It is also very special to me because this is a war that we won for the freedom of our country.

A twenty-year-old youth wrote that the day 'conjures up images of bravery, faith and spirit of fighting'. It would be hard to come by this kind of impassioned writing by

school kids or college youth even in institutional magazines, let alone in the mainstream English or Hindi press in India.

Pakistan's preoccupation with India has historical roots, and to that extent it is reciprocated by India. But it is also a reflection of the militarization of Pakistan's civic life and economy. India too has a military-industrial complex, and its recent growth has made some contribution to the dearth of dissent on issues like defence expenditure; but in the case of Pakistan, the military is embedded in civic administration, hence its perceptions and needs affect people's everyday reality in a pervasive manner. Pakistani journalist Khaled Ahmed makes the point that the Indo-Pak conflict has become a site of common vested interests which use the media to divert public attention from domestic crises. 'In Pakistan too', he says, 'it costs the state machinery a lot of effort to divert popular attention to India as the enemy state.'¹¹

Looking towards Indian perceptions in these contexts, it seems we have great difficulty regarding Pakistan as another 'developing' or Third World country. Its involvement in Kashmir, as an active supporter of terrorist activity, has overshadowed all other impressions, which were few to begin with. A coarse, almost sordid image of day-to-day reality in Pakistan is widespread in India. It has two ostensible sources: television coverage which exclusively uses crass, often violent, imagery; and a negative stereotype of Muslim life which represents it as messy, poor and cruel. The failure of democracy is yet another contributor to Pakistan's negative image. Even highly educated, liberal-minded Indians regard Pakistani society as basically an army looking for a country. The intellectual, aesthetic and cultural aspects of life in Pakistan are not widely known, barring a few names, and even travellers' tales are rare.

Most important, the perception that Pakistan was not a genuine product of historical processes, but an aberration caused partly by artificially heightened personal fury and partly as an imperialist conspiracy, obviates the need to take it seriously as an independent society.¹²

Reciprocal darkness regarding India in the Pakistani mind is no less pervasive and deep. There are no India-study centres in Pakistan. Private channels of Indian television make what little difference they can, but Pakistan's instincts towards India seem to be derived mainly from pre-Partition memory, and the same is true of the knowledge of Pakistan one generally finds in India. There are better-informed, liberal-minded individuals on both sides of the border. They perform a complex role in shaping mutual perceptions. Liberal voices in India try to soften the stereotype images of Pakistan by talking or writing about the everyday reality of life and society they gather during their visits to Pakistan or when they, in turn, are visited by Pakistani friends. They also soften the harsh image of Pakistan as a country of religious fanatics by commenting on the rise of religious fanaticism in India. Their secular credentials permit them to maintain a certain degree of impartiality with regard to the hostile relationship of the two countries. It seems that when they visit Pakistan, they are received well but are perceived as strange and rather inconvenient emissaries of an enemy country. Their counterparts, namely the liberal-minded Pakistanis, have a similar problem. In Pakistan, they sustain a shrinking intellectual space available for dissent, but when they visit India and talk about the grim reality of Pakistan, many of them eagerly cater to the common Indian urge to receive a hopelessly negative picture of Pakistan. The open ethos of India encourages and pushes them to paint Pakistan's

already harsh political reality in lurid colours. Like the Indian liberals, suspected of not representing real Indian feelings because they come across as being remarkably unprejudiced and friendly towards Pakistan, the Pakistani liberals too are suspected of not being true representatives because they are so fiercely critical of their own country.

4

Ideology and Textbooks

Educational activity of any kind depends on a text, visible or invisible. In post-colonial societies like India and Pakistan, school teaching uses highly visible texts which carry the status of 'prescribed' texts. The status these texts have, and the manner in which they are used, are rooted in the system of education—its history and its relationship with the larger socio-political milieu. The texts used for the teaching of history are particularly sensitive to contemporary politics and culture, for the reason that the writing of history inevitably constitutes a response to the present. As Hobsbawm says, we depend on the 'mercy of time' to get a better view of what we are going through at present.¹ The past also provides a resource for legitimizing the present, and this role has special importance for the historian who writes for young, school-going children. How knowledge about the past is selected, reconstructed and

represented in textbooks written for school-children assumes great significance for a study like the present one which intends to probe how a common past acquires distinct versions under two systems of education. Our probe requires a recall of the debates and controversies that have influenced the teaching of history in the two countries. The records of these debates—and they are far from over—have the potential to give us valuable insights into the relationship between national ideology and textbooks.

Secular vs Communal

Changes introduced in the curricular policy in India in the early phase of post-independence planning have remained in effect, despite a substantial controversy that flared up in the late 1970s. It is only now that the orientation of entrenched curriculum policy is facing a real threat. The evolution of curriculum and textbook policy in history has had as much to do with the politics of education as with the state's cultural policy. As far as the state's education policy is concerned, its modernist orientation was articulated quite forcefully in the Secondary Education Commission which wrote its report during the early 1950s. It emphasized the need to relate the teaching of all school subjects to the psychological needs of children and their everyday world. The commission endorsed the teaching of history, geography and civics under the auspices of an encompassing social studies approach.

The creation of the NCERT in the early 1960s was, undoubtedly, aimed at strengthening the modernist orientation of curriculum policy but 'national development' had by now surfaced as an overarching theme of modernization, and it had begun to convey a specific

Indian connotation. The Kothari Commission report, written in the mid-1960s, articulated a position in which a national perspective was assumed to be synonymous with a modern perspective. In comparison to the Secondary Education Commission, the new commission displayed greater willingness to turn nation-building into an ideology and to see education as the prime instrument of propagating it.

Heuristic methodologies of teaching, emphasizing the child's freedom to negotiate knowledge, were no more centre-stage. Even manual work—proposed by Gandhi and supported by early Plan documents—was now perceived as being subservient to the general reorganization of academic learning around the theme of 'nation-building'. The ideology of national development, which the term 'nation-building' symbolized, now served as a framework within which economic, socio-cultural and educational aims could be defined. Understandably, a young nation-state which had fought two wars in a span of four years and was undergoing a period of political uncertainty was less patient than before with the ideal of a child's freedom to reconstruct knowledge in the context of a local ethos.²

The voluminous report of the Kothari Commission set the agenda for a state which was under pressure to reorganize and assert its role in education. Publication of textbooks under the auspices of state-run bodies gained approval in this phase, and the responsibility to produce model textbooks fell upon the NCERT. The circumstances shaping the publication of NCERT's history textbooks were somewhat fortuitous, though they appear consistent with the leftward tilt of Indira Gandhi's early years as prime minister. The opportunity to write these textbooks had arisen under M.C. Chagla (minister of education from

1963-1966) as a result of the initiative taken by a group of young historians, among whom was Romila Thapar. She recalls how the NCERT's history series was not really born out of a policy decision, but rather out of an initiative for which the ethos was just right:

If I may be autobiographical, in the early sixties some of us did a survey of the textbooks that were used in the schools of Delhi. We were appalled at how bad they were. We wrote a very passionate letter to the then education minister M.C. Chagla and said that something should be done to change this, at least start from the textbooks. Chagla promptly wrote back that since we were so concerned and we were a bunch of historians, we should write the new textbooks.³

Some of the historians who wrote the NCERT's history series during the late 1960s and the early 1970s were front-line scholars whose methodology and findings had exercised a profound influence on the substance and quality of Indian historiography. In their school textbooks, however, they displayed surprisingly limited awareness of the need to disseminate the gains of their own professional labour through imaginative pedagogy. These textbooks were undoubtedly far superior to the ones in use at the time, marking a significant departure in perspective and content, but in terms of style and the ability to communicate with children, they were not particularly distinguishable from earlier texts.

During the post-Emergency Janata regime of the late 1970s, the NCERT textbooks came under attack from within the government. The issues raised by the critics were far from new; they had been part of a key debate in

Indian historiography, but now they were used for mounting an ideological assault on curriculum policy in history. In their study of this controversy, Rudolph and Rudolph have identified its principal cause as the Janata Party's 'inability to resolve its orientation towards the meaning and practice of secularism and its perceived opposite, communalism'.⁴ In retrospect, we can easily view this controversy in relation to the deeper tensions which, for nearly three decades since Independence, had remained hidden under the aura of a strong federal leadership. Matters as fundamental as the idea of India, and the definition of Indian identity were at stake, and the arguments had been in political circulation for at least sixty years, if not more. As a value-position, secularism had represented a contested political space since the early 1920s; in the late 1970s, the contest was showing signs of getting keener.

The NCERT was able to turn a blind eye to this controversy for another two decades, but the choices available at the provincial level were already quite varied. In several states, school textbooks had proved to be more accommodating of the political configurations associated with the Hindu revivalist ideology. Also, the chain of schools directly linked to this ideology had become quite long.⁵ The main users of the NCERT textbooks were English-medium public schools and the elite layer of state-run schools, whose students were mainly the children of Central government employees. Some of the Congress-ruled states had adapted the NCERT texts for middle schools, leaving the senior students of history to choose from among the privately published books.

Although the political orientation of the NCERT series was modernist and progressive, its pedagogic character was quite conventional. The authors were committed to

the teaching of history as a means of promoting rational thinking, but their own style and approach provided little room for children to participate in historical analysis and judgement. The controversy surrounding this series had mainly to do with the part covering medieval India, and the main charge was that the texts were not sufficiently hard on Muslim rulers of the period. Neither the authors nor the critics seemed much bothered about the strategies used in the texts for communicating with young readers.⁶ This was perhaps one reason why the part which covered the freedom struggle, especially its concluding phase, received so little attention. The treatment given to the freedom struggle represented a stance which had inadvertently achieved the status of an ideological consensus between the right and the Left. The consensus could be seen at its sharpest over the symbolic value of India's Partition.

For both the secular-minded Left and the Hindu revivalists, the Partition represented an event that had injured the idea of India. From the secular perspective, Partition was a blow to the pluralist character of Indian society and its composite culture. The opponents of secular historians also saw Partition as a big blow—to the continuity and territorial integrity of the Hindu civilization—engineered by Muslims whose ancestry was said to lie among medieval invaders. British manipulation to ensure India's division was a prominent component of both interpretations of Partition. So long as the text did not encourage children to think about the nature of the injury that Partition had caused, rival interpretations would stay buried. The NCERT texts fulfilled this condition as happily as any other school book written on the freedom struggle, because none of them were designed to make children think.

Uses of Religion

The secular-communal duality that we find at the bottom of Indian debates on curriculum and textbook policy in history have a parallel in the difficulties that Pakistan has faced in constructing a convincing national self-identity. Indeed, the issue of identity has been acknowledged by many commentators on Pakistan's politics as a chronic source of crisis.⁷ It is true that many 'new' nation-states formed out of anti-colonial struggles faced the challenge of defining themselves, but Pakistan faced a deeper, existential challenge because of the nature of the specific struggle that brought it into being.

The political processes that culminated in the Partition of India and the creation of a sovereign 'homeland' for Muslims had deep and tangled psychological underpinnings. These can be spotted both in the political and administrative history of the Indian subcontinent as well as in the shaping of inter-community relationships since the latter half of the nineteenth century, the period coterminous with the maturation of colonial rule. A vast but compartmentalized body of literature exists on these processes. It is compartmentalized both in terms of the country of its origin and the genre or discipline in which its components have been produced. Studies of Partition and reflections on it constitute a huge storehouse if we include Indian and Pakistani works in history, politics, biography, literature and journalism. Modest attempts have been made recently to make sense of rival perspectives, but we are quite far from reaching the point where a student might have access to sufficient material for developing a holistic view of Partition.⁸ When we discuss education in Pakistan in the context of the present study, we are necessarily handicapped by the absence of an integrated understanding.

Anyone taking even a cursory look at the organization of curriculum in Pakistan today will notice how central a place the urge to define and construct the idea of Pakistan occupies in the system. This impulse finds an expression rather more powerful than what the customary mention of national identity might suggest in an official document of education policy. In the case of Pakistan, the concern for national identity takes the form of an inspired mission, which, to an outsider, might appear almost obsessive. It gets articulated in official documents and in the writings of men who have had an important role in the development of education policy, as a commitment to the ideological basis of Pakistan. As an Indian reader of Pakistan's educational policy—its latest version is intended to cover the period from 1998 to 2010—one is struck by the ease with which the word 'ideology' is used to define or justify the orientation of the system and its curriculum. This is how the latest policy document talks about the role of ideology:

Although the previous educational policies did dilate on Islamic education and Pakistan ideology, but these policies did not suggest how to translate the Islamic ideology into our moral profile and imbibe it in our educational system.⁹

But this usage of the term 'ideology' is not new. I.H. Qureshi, whose influence on Pakistan's education system extended over a long time since its inception, wrote that 'all patriotic educationists would agree that the textbooks should reflect our ideology and values'.¹⁰ Apparently, the word 'ideology' is used in Pakistan to indicate a rationale for national self-identity. As a term, it forms the heart of an educational discourse that an Indian cannot easily

comprehend. The effort to understand it requires us to notice the self-portrait and the anxiety that state documents and prescribed textbooks project in Pakistan.

Pronouncements of the kind quoted earlier can be read in different ways: they may be interpreted as expressions of the anxiety born out of Pakistan's historical experience; they may also indicate the stagnation of the educational policy. Keeping this range of interpretations in mind, we can attribute the urge to emphasize Pakistan's uniqueness to a basic tension which is inherent in the historical genesis of Pakistan. This tension arises out of the hope that religion can be used as a morally regenerating force on the one hand, and the modalities that the task of political mobilization necessarily involved under colonial and post-colonial conditions, on the other. The demand for the creation of Pakistan had in it an idealist promise which drew its mobilizing resources from religion even as it cobbled a material base in a dispersed petite bourgeois class.¹¹ In any promise of this kind, an inexhaustible source of self-criticism and appeal for deeper commitment are to be expected as strategies for sustenance. Religion is, after all, the ultimate expression of the human urge for an ideal life. When a political struggle is based on it, it is more than likely to become a never-ending game of the recovery of faith. In such a struggle, the common people have a highly ambiguous role to play. Their cultural practices and values are constantly under assessment by the leaders who must articulate the demand for faith in the nation, which translates into faith in a religion. In such a nation, people's culture is never free to be the locus of debate on civic values; rather, the culture must face the critique of being consistent or otherwise with the values prescribed in religion.

Education is particularly vulnerable to this critique for

two reasons, one theoretical and the other historical. The theoretical reason is that education on its own is often seen as an expression of philosophical ideals. In all traditional conceptions of education, including Islamic ones, moral ideals concerning the development of character, individual or social, get priority over everyday life in which learning or education occurs in the course of cultural practices.¹² When education is discussed in a nation-state which is conceptually based on religion, it is highly unlikely that the everyday cultural practices of common people will be treated as the key context of education. In such a nation-state, moral promises of education are likely to gain overwhelming importance, and that is precisely what has happened in the case of Pakistan.

The second reason why education is particularly vulnerable to a constant critique which reiterates ultimate ideals, lies in the colonial history of education in the subcontinent. The colonial conception of education, as distinguished from colonial policy, was based on a moral assessment of the colonized by the colonizer. A substantial part of the epistemology of colonial educational practices was structured around a moral critique of Indian society and culture. Textbook content in different school subjects was designed to counter those characteristics of the traditional culture which the colonizer had identified as morally enfeebling. These were typically described as the lack of moral fibre and proneness to being guided by emotions rather than rationality. Curricular practices promoted under colonial rule conflicted with the child's cultural milieu, though as a system, education helped colonial rulers to consolidate their alliance with the traditionally dominant sections of society. Schools treated upper- and lower-caste children quite differently, but

classroom processes remained isolated from children's everyday life in a pervasive sense, ignoring the skills, knowledge and the aesthetic traditions of rural society.¹³

Post-independence educational policies in India and Pakistan have reinforced this epistemic structure of colonial education. In Pakistan, the national ideal of Islam as the state religion has further strengthened the system's inherent tendency to separate the child from the living reality of the daily practices, material as well as cultural, surrounding him. Religion has provided an additional layer to the colonial argument that the main purpose of education is to strengthen the child's character. The dimensions in which the goal of moral improvement is defined have changed somewhat, but the preponderance of the moral has remained unchanged. Emphasis on moral development implies a number of additions to the traditional concern for personal conduct and commitment to community values. During the Zia years, moral development was increasingly defined as dedication to the national ideal of an Islamic republic. In practical terms, it meant the internalization of a masculine, war-oriented and essentially anti-Hindu ideal of the nation-state.¹⁴ To what extent the education system could actually disseminate this ideal was a different matter. As a goal, it gained official approval.

After the first two post-Independence decades of official attempts to modernize the system of education as a whole, Pakistani authorities used state education to harness the political support of the ulema, leaving the post-colonial elites free to develop their private schools in keeping with the traditions of 'public' school practices.¹⁵ These schools have incorporated some aspects of modern pedagogic theory into the general pattern of a disciplinarian regime that 'public' schools stand for in South Asia. In the state-run

system, curriculum policy went through dramatic changes after the Ayub era even as the imperative to accommodate Islamic revivalism in a half-reformed colonial system of education became a political necessity. The new trends included emphasis on the teaching of religion; centralized decision-making and, after 1971, the promotion of 'Pakistan ideology'. Introduction of 'social studies' in the Ayub era was a part of the modernization drive; it was now subsumed under 'Pakistan Studies' though, in the junior classes, the earlier approach remained intact. 'Pakistan Studies' as a school subject symbolized the post-1971 effort to reconstruct the nation's self-identity. It also implied a deeper alienation of curriculum policy from the everyday reality of children, and from the vast body of historical knowledge which held Pakistan and India epistemically together. As a substitute for the study of history, 'Pakistan Studies' paved the way for what Ayesha Jalal has called the 'amalgamation of bigotry and power'.¹⁶

The concept of 'Pakistan Studies' made a great impact on the history syllabus, particularly on the narrative of the freedom struggle. The new subject legitimized the already prevalent tendency to jettison the notion of a common cause that the anti-colonial struggle had nurtured in different sections of Indian society. Authors of 'Pakistan Studies' textbooks were expected to identify with the 'Pakistan Movement' and tell a story much shorter and simpler than that narrated by authors of earlier textbooks. The history of earlier periods was also rewritten with the purpose of denying any significance to the pre-Islamic past of the Indian subcontinent and denigrating the emergence of accommodative cultural and political trends in the late-medieval period.¹⁷

Much has happened in Pakistan's political life since the end of Zia-ul-Haq's military rule in 1988, but the shape

that curriculum and educational policy acquired during his regime have remained largely intact. For one thing, centralized designing of syllabus and textbooks has not been questioned. Institutions of civil society have regained some strength, but apparently not enough to raise a comprehensive debate on the aims of education in the context of Pakistan's multi-ethnic society.

The struggle between modernist and fundamentalist elements has been a central theme of Pakistan's political history since independence, but this struggle does not receive the appreciation it deserves from many observers of Pakistan, including Indian ones, who find fault with the very idea of Pakistan. The same applies to the development of the economy and commerce, which according to Reetz, have had a strong integrating influence on Pakistan's national life.¹⁸ A common perception is that Pakistan's economy is in a chronic state of crisis. The rise of religious sectarianism and fundamentalism, particularly in the wake of the civil war in Afghanistan, has contributed to a depressive domestic ethos. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the westernized elite are willing to compromise with religious fundamentalists. According to Malik, this strategy of compromise is based on the mistaken premise that cultural and religious revivalism can be handled by means of occasional political accommodation.¹⁹ As far as education is concerned, the presence of revivalist, sectarian voices is substantial. Even if state departments of education and teacher training institutions are not all fundamentalist in outlook, the ethos in which they function certainly carries a pronounced stamp of fundamentalism. That is the ethos in which official textbooks are written, taught and read.

Certain parallels with India can now be noticed. There is no denying the fact that the politics of religious and caste

identity has gained popularity over the last two decades due to the propagation of inter-religious suspicion and caste hatred. The main axis of the politics of religious revivalism remains what it was during the anti-colonial struggle—namely, the Hindu-Muslim relationship—but other axes have surfaced from time to time, depending on regional compositions and situations. Hindu revivalism broadly underlies this phenomenon, but its diverse political and cultural expressions are not easy to trace. The decline of the Congress as a party committed to secularism and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in India's neighbourhood and within India form the background required to explain the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party and its associate groups during the 1990s. The impact of these political developments on education has been quite noticeable, even in elite public schools which are normally regarded as bastions of the liberal personality. State-run schools have also undergone a loss of resistance to religio-revivalist propaganda. Both teachers and children have been exposed to the propaganda of religious revivalism in their life outside school. Besides, there has been a remarkable rise in the number of schools directly run by revivalist organizations. The vast chain of Saraswati schools is one prominent network of revivalist educational effort; there are several parallel religio-educational networks of this kind in operation now.²⁰

Seen in this grim background, the official policy to propagate secularism with the help of textbooks looks like using an ageing barrier against a powerful current. The importance given in recent policy documents to 'value education'—a cover for ideological indoctrination—is an ominous pointer to future dangers.

Common Heritage

The differences we notice between the educational and political scenarios of present-day India and Pakistan need not cloud our appreciation of the status and power that prescribed textbooks have in the educational system of both countries. The peculiar hold that textbooks have on the system can only be understood in the historical context of colonial policies. The construction of official knowledge became an important aspect of the colonial enterprise once education was accepted as an administrative need and responsibility.²¹ In all subjects, including history, textbooks and examinations emerged as the two vital instruments of control on what might be taught and learnt in the expanding system of education. The content of textbooks would reflect the official perspective, and the highly centralized examination procedures would ensure that the content was used as the boundary for the teacher's role as an interpreter or elucidator. Questions asked in the examination paper had to be strictly from the textbook, and the answer which closely reflected the content of the text got the highest marks. Under the colonial system, textbooks were prescribed, not just recommended or approved. That is why publishers vied with one another to get their textbooks prescribed.

Some aspects of this system have changed, but the importance of the textbook in the school's daily life and its status as the only reliable indicator of what is expected in the examination have remained intact. Both India and Pakistan now have state institutions like textbook boards and corporations that prepare textbooks, and many of them are also directly involved in publishing. The NCERT in India, and the Federal Curriculum Wing in Pakistan, are

key apparatuses of the gigantic state machinery which controls and distributes knowledge across the system. Though terms like 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' are in use, in practice, it is the prescribed textbook which acts as the de facto curriculum. Indeed, the official syllabus does not reach thousands of state schools; the textbook does, and its content tells both the teacher and the student how to prepare for the examination. In any case, the syllabus is no more than a list of topics to be covered, and many textbooks reflect just that in their contents page. Also, conventions of paper-setting for the crucial examinations taken at the end of Classes X and XII require that nothing which has been left out by textbook writers will be asked in examinations. Even privately published textbook and examination guides—in many cases, the difference between the two is marginal—also reflect the requirements of the syllabus-examination nexus.

Let us look at an examination question to make this discussion a little more specific before we conclude it. Here is a five-mark question, asked in the CBSE Class XII examination in the year 2000, for history: 'In what way did the revolt of 1857 influence the nationalists during the struggle for freedom?' The question assumes that there is one particular 'way' in which the 1857 revolt influenced later nationalists. That one way is explained in the prescribed textbook, and students are expected to reproduce the vocabulary and argument that the textbook uses. In any case, a five-mark question does not allow the kind of time it would take the examinees to devise their own arguments. Under the pressure of this kind of system, textbooks do become 'official gospels', as Jalal says in a paper on Pakistan's history books.²² She also makes an insightful observation about the long-term importance of textbook learning. It is

a common experience that information or facts memorized for an examination are forgotten soon after it is over. So, one may ask, is the content of textbooks, worth analysing in detail? Jalal says:

The gems of wisdom contained in textbooks rarely survive the writing of the exam. But with help from the state-controlled media, the lessons learned at school and college serve as the alphabet and the grammar that makes psyches literate in the idioms of national ideology.²³

The symmetry she draws between textbooks and the media may not be fully applicable to India, but the point that textbooks represent the grammar of 'national ideology' is true for both countries. For a fuller understanding of this grammar, it is worth examining school textbooks.

PART II

Rival Histories

5

Freedom Struggle As a Narrative

‘At the stroke of the midnight hour’, Jawaharlal Nehru said on 14 August 1947, ‘when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom.’ Nehru was apparently addressing a world audience, a community of free nation-states which India was about to enter. The struggle for freedom from colonial rule had ended. The same struggle had created a national fraternity in a highly complex society characterized by a hierarchy of castes, and a multiplicity of languages and faiths. Religious divisions proved more difficult to bridge than the distinctions of language or caste. These had, under colonial conditions, created the ground for the rise of a rival national fraternity called Pakistan. Freedom had a different meaning for Pakistan, for it was born as a result of India’s freedom struggle, not merely ‘woken up’, as

India was from a long sleep in Nehru's choice of metaphor. But for both India and Pakistan, the fight against the British was to have great value as a memory. By preserving it and passing it on to the young, they could hope to consolidate themselves as nation-states. Older nation-states, whose national identities had been born as far back as the eighteenth century or since, had done exactly that. Generation after generation, they had engaged the young in what Anderson¹ calls 'the deep shaping of imagination' which is required to sustain faith in a national community. India and Pakistan needed to do the same thing, by recasting the record of their struggle for freedom into a narrative for the young.

The common desire of adults to tell children what had happened before they were born, spontaneously gives past experiences the form of a story. Without deliberate planning, memory acquires the structure and tone of a narrative. Features like a beginning and an end surface in a manner we can only call spontaneous, and the narrative is articulated in a tone of reassurance that certifies the authenticity of the story. This common, everyday experience of adult discourse for children is a metaphor that enables us to conceptualize the job done by historians who write school textbooks. Throughout this book I have referred to these writers as 'school historians', although I am aware that some of them are professional historians who have written school textbooks, under a special assignment. While writing scholarly books of history, they deal with the past as a lawyer might deal with a case, or an architect with a contract for a building—with considerable freedom to apply the instruments of their profession to reconstruct and represent the past. When they act as school historians, however, they have a special kind of job, comparable to

that of a lawyer who represents the state or an architect who is under a contract to design a national monument. The modern enterprise of school education is inevitably a state enterprise, and in no area of knowledge is the state's sensitivity towards the structure and style of representation as high as in history. History assumes the focus of the state's anxiety to structure what Rennie calls, 'an image of a common past designed to cement group cohesion and build solidarity'.²

In the school textbooks of India and Pakistan we have two prototypes of the story of freedom from colonial rule. On the face of it, they look like two versions of a common past. Within each version there are several variations, but no variation within each prototype displays the sharpness that distinguishes the two prototypes. The distinctions have much to do with the fact that they represent 'national' versions. What makes them sharply distinct, rather than merely different, is the peculiar relationship of the two nations which use the dual versions of history as a means of socializing the young into a national identity. Inasmuch as the relationship is based on hostility and mutual denial of integrity, the two prototypes make rival attempts to use historical memories as a resource for national imagination.

In the chapters that follow, the two prototypes of the story of freedom will be referred to as 'master narratives'. The term implies an overarching commonality that different textbooks of history in each country demonstrate as a national set. The commonality is obviously related to the national perspective that different authors share despite variations in their interpretation of specific events and approach to the subject. Inasmuch as the school historians of each country take a 'national' stance on the past, they remind us of the truth of Hobsbawm's contention that

'history is not ancestral memory or collective tradition . . . It is what people learn from priests, school masters, the writers of history books and the compilers of magazine articles and television programmes'.³

Three Traits

Three salient features have been used in this study as the criteria for comparing the two master narratives. One is the *politics of mention*; the other two are *pacing* and the *conception of the end*. The first two are categories that might be regarded as being universally applicable for the study of historical narratives. The third one has a special appeal for this study. By politics of mention I mean the decision to include or exclude an event or part of an event in the narrative.⁴

The decision to mention a name or to overlook it is similar since such decisions ultimately reflect the politics of memory which is integral to the discipline of history, particularly when this discipline supplies narratives of the past for the school-going child. Numerous examples, which will be cited in the course of this study, show that the decision to mention an event or a person, and the alternative decision to not mention these are directly related to the process of identity-building in a national context. That process is more complex and larger than history-writing for children, but its influence on the latter cannot be denied. At any given point in time, school historians are influenced by the larger process of identity-building as they decide whether a fact is worth mentioning. The decision to offer an elaborate explanation or not has similar roots. Items that seem worthy of elaboration are almost inevitably the ones which have contemporary significance in the process of national management and consolidation.

Pacing is an aspect of story-telling which has many linkages with the politics of mention discussed earlier, but it also has to do with the nature of an education system, particularly how it treats knowledge—as a body of facts or as an opportunity to make sense. Both India and Pakistan have examination-centred systems of education, which means that the students are socialized and trained to pay more attention to individual facts than to the connections between them.⁵ In history, this means rapid movement from event to event, with a few points thrown in by way of explaining the direction that the events took. The school historian is expected to move briskly from one event to the next, constructing what we might call an episodic memory chain. The compact size of textbooks—a sure way to keep the price down—does not allow room for leisurely interpretation.

The third feature is the conceptualization of the end or the point where a narrative of history comes to a stop. For the freedom struggle of India and Pakistan, that point comes in 1947. That this end point is conceptualized very differently in the master narratives of the two countries has to do with the nature and logic of the national memory that these narratives construct. For India, the end signifies a great achievement, along with a terrible sense of loss and sadness. For Pakistan, the end signifies a remarkable achievement, somewhat mitigated by a sense of injustice. There are other nuances too. A sense of self-protection and escape is embedded in the Pakistani master narrative; a sense of failure to subvert a conspiracy is embedded in the Indian master narrative. As a moot structural feature, these differences have implications for the treatment that certain events, which occurred as much as two decades or more before the end, receive. School historians in both countries

seem acutely sensitive to the specific character of the memory of the 'end' which is relevant to the two nationalisms. They routinely use their knowledge of the end to project intentions and apprehensions on to the actors involved in history.

The 'end' has another implication which colours its significance as memory in the two countries. In the Indian case, the end of the freedom struggle marks the end of the history syllabus and the textbook in most states. After more than five decades of independence, the Indian system of education has not been able to introduce the history of post-independence India in the school curriculum.⁶ In certain states like Uttar Pradesh, the history textbook offers in a few pages a sketchy run of the main events that have occurred since 1947, but this kind of coverage is essentially a listing, not history. For the majority of school-children, the history of India *starts* in ancient times and comes to an *end* in 1947. In this manner, the end of the freedom struggle also marks the end of history, i.e. the history one learns at school. Thus, Partition comprises the *latest* news that Indian students receive about Pakistan. True, they are exposed to the knowledge that news bulletins and films on television bring, but this kind of knowledge has neither the stamp of validity that schools offer nor any systematic organization.

The Pakistani case is quite remarkably different in its treatment of 1947 as the 'end' of the freedom struggle. This end also constitutes the formal beginning of the nation-state called Pakistan, and it is hardly surprising that in contrast to India, Pakistan has introduced post-independence history in a substantial manner at various stages of education. In the Pakistani structuring of knowledge about the past, the Partition of India as an 'end' of the freedom movement

is embedded in a longer history which, in fact, *starts* from 1947. Most textbooks discuss the division of assets and other problems of national reconstruction faced during the years following independence. The Objectives Resolution passed in 1949, the attempts to make and remake a Constitution, Five-Year Plans, and the process of Islamization cover a substantial portion of senior-level textbooks. All these topics, particularly the process of Islamization, provide a continuity to the history of the Pakistan Movement which forms the focus of the narrative of freedom. Only a few textbooks, used in upmarket English-medium schools, dwell on painful topics like the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971.

Blurred Divergence

The divergence we find in the Indian and Pakistani perceptions of the end of the freedom struggle encourages us to assume that the histories presented in the textbooks of the two countries would generally comprise mirror images of each other. Such an assumption would seem plausible in view of the continuous animosity that has characterized the relationship between India and Pakistan since 1947.

Not just the wars they have formally fought with each other, but even peacetime domestic developments and events in the rest of the world have been reported in contrasting ways by the media of the two countries. It is also self-evident that they do not have common national heroes. Quite sensibly, then, their textbooks can be expected to represent the struggle waged against the British in contrasting ways. Plausible though such a hypothesis looks, the fact is that the master narratives we confront in the school textbooks of India and Pakistan do not constitute mirror images of each other. The two narratives are

different, but in a highly complex manner. It is not as if each episode to which great significance is attached in one is trivialized in the other. Rather, we find that there is a selection of historical facts which follows an interpretable trajectory. As we come closer to the end of the narrative, i.e. to Independence and Partition, the selection becomes increasingly stringent and the contrast between the two narratives gets sharper. In earlier episodes, the mention or discussion of an event, or silence over it, is more random, suggesting a vague kind of memory politics which becomes clearer in the later episodes.

The complexity we see in the representation of events applies to the portrayal of eminent personalities as well. It is not true that the heroes of one narrative appear as villains in the other. Rather, we find that textbook writers of the two countries assign different levels of significance to a common set of personalities. In certain cases, different segments of an individual's biography are highlighted. This happens, for example, in the case of Syed Ahmad Khan and Iqbal. Indian textbooks prefer to confine their attention to the earlier part of their lives whereas Pakistani texts prefer to focus on the later part.

In the Pakistani representation of Gandhi and the Indian representation of Jinnah, we find serious distortions, but they seem to be rooted more often in the overlooking of certain details than in putative misrepresentation with the help of adjectives. Despite the hostility and strategic indifference shown by the two nation-states in their official behaviour, their school textbooks contain several common memories, including memories of individuals who achieved eminence in the course of the freedom movement. If a South Asian history of the freedom struggle is ever written for a combined readership of the children of India, Pakistan

and other countries in the region, such common memories will obviously have great value.

One reason why the two master narratives are not as strikingly divergent as to look like mirror images can be found in the number of similarities they feature. We have already discussed (in Chapter 3) the source of similarities embedded in the common colonial educational heritage of India and Pakistan, such as the overwhelming role the prescribed textbooks have in shaping classroom teaching. Here I want to refer to a similarity underlying the historiography used in the two master narratives. They both focus on 'high' politics rather than on the social dynamics which find expression in politics.

Some of the Indian textbooks claim that they attempt to take a comprehensive look at history, including its social and economic aspects. More than others, the textbooks published by the NCERT emphasize that they concentrate on 'forces, movements and institutions rather than on details of military and diplomatic events, and on the biographical details of individual administrators and leaders'.⁷ This claim is borne out to a far greater extent in the coverage of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries than of the twentieth. The twentieth-century segment of the narrative of the freedom movement in the NCERT textbooks is just as devoid of sociological insights as this segment is in other Indian textbooks. The focus, consistently, is on political events and decisions taken by eminent leaders and British administrators. In many cases, events are represented solely as the outcome of decisions taken by leaders. This tendency is particularly strong in the representation of Muslim society and its politics. Muslim separatism is interpreted in terms of the motives and responses of a few political leaders.

That there were millions of ordinary men and women who constituted the society engaged in the struggle against colonial rule is a thought a young reader of textbooks might occasionally entertain, but the texts themselves do not use it as a constant frame of reference. Where these ordinary people do appear, they do so as objects of mobilization, virtually at the mercy of powerful, larger-than-life politicians who designed the directions to which the people might be led. That these millions of people were simultaneously going through a socio-economic transformation which had its own implications, both psychological and sociological, stays far from the orbit of attention sketched out by the writers of school textbooks. One aspect of the problem is that no single, overarching narrative can comfortably and justly accommodate the diversity of people's experiences, perceptions and movements. The attempt to impart to the freedom struggle an overarching character also suffers from the tendency to narrate its story in a mainly politico-administrative framework.

The freedom struggle, even in terms used by its avowed leaders, was not confined to politics; it had explicit elements of social reform and change, such as Gandhi's movement against untouchability. Textbooks mention these social currents mainly with reference to the leaders who initiated or advocated them, not as aspects of socio-cultural change. The larger process inherent in the changes that technology and industrialization had brought about in transport, communication, employment and education receives nominal importance, that too mainly in the context of the nineteenth century. A few text writers, who try to discuss these processes at some length, do so without establishing any comprehensible linkages between them and socio-political changes.

This larger process may be addressed by invoking the concept of modernization even though it is vague and capable of being interpreted in several ways. The idea of the individual as a unit of society, and the rise of communities inspired by a virtual self-image have a lot to do with processes associated with industrialization and modernization. Technological changes in modes of communication and storage of information and economic changes linked to capitalist development are historically responsible for the idea of self-identity in both a personal and collective sense. In the latter sense, self-identity lay at the heart of early nationalist politics in all modern societies as Freitag has pointed out.⁸ Politics of the kind that was taking root towards the end of the nineteenth century in colonial India had a 'modern' character inasmuch as it involved the formation and expression of self-identity. Based on a highly limited franchise, politics under colonial rule triggered off an intense competition among elite groups, religious communities and castes. Though it had the formal features of democracy, it aroused collective anxieties and fears as often as it shaped new dreams and aspirations. Unfortunately, no Indian or Pakistani textbook discusses the nature and logic of political life under the British, or explains how it was different from politics today.

Personalities of religious reformers and political leaders have a greater presence in the Pakistani master narrative from its beginning. Even primary-level children are required to memorize whole lists of names. Some of the names included in these lists date back to medieval times. Textbooks assert that the Muslims residing in the Indian subcontinent always maintained their distinct cultural identity despite the influential presence of the Hindu religion. Yet, no glimpse of cultural life that children

might relate to or explore further is provided by these books. How the arrival of print technology and modern transport affected culture and language is among the numerous pedagogically interesting issues that Pakistani school historians totally ignore. This is not to suggest that Indian textbooks treat these issues in any distinctly better manner.

Education is the only aspect of civic life that Pakistani textbook writers attempt to weave into the narrative of freedom, but even here the emphasis is on the efforts of one individual: Syed Ahmad Khan. However, his personality is portrayed in stock terms, with hardly any details that might enable children to place him in a historical context. In the matter of ignoring the child's perspective and making no provision for entry points or clues which children might use to extend their textbook learning, Pakistani writers are one with their Indian counterparts. Their common preoccupation is to build a pantheon. The names engraved in gold inside it are supposed to inspire veneration and awe, not to motivate the young to examine the lives of the named individuals with curiosity and patience.

This shared incapacity makes sense in the context of the second similarity between the two master narratives. Both treat the freedom struggle as an allegory, composed for the purpose of reminding the young that they are inheritors of a great storehouse of values. Great personalities are presented essentially as embodiments of values and ideals which the young readers are expected to imbibe. The assumption is that the story of the freedom movement conveys a coherent set of values. The thought that many of the great leaders involved in the national movement believed in strikingly divergent ideals does not disturb the

narrators.⁹ Ideals are attributed not only to individual personalities, but to the struggle itself. The story of freedom taught to children in India and Pakistan acquires, at a number of junctures, a vocal sense of uninterrupted continuity of the present with the past. At this level, the narrative becomes a statement of collective values and identity, reminding the young readers of today that 'we' are the same people who fought against the British. It is in this mode that the narrative of freedom in both countries attains its deepest resonance which we will now attempt to analyse.

Memory Posters

Collective memory is not an aggregate of individual memories, but rather a new structure on its own. It takes shape in the course of adult transmission of the knowledge concerning the past, both in informal settings like home and formal settings like the school. To receive and assimilate this knowledge is an important part of growing up. Adult-child interaction permits some room for the child's own devices, but in the case of knowledge concerning what happened in the past, the child has no access to independent resources. Becoming party to a collective memory of the past and developing a sense of identity consistent with that memory are inevitable aspects of socialization. If a narrative of history is designed to give children no clue regarding its basis or logic, it is highly likely that they might internalize it as a series of memory posters—scenes of the past hanging free of a time-frame. The history taught in school is highly conducive to the propagation of memory posters. In comparison with other school subjects, history offers the least opportunities for children to exercise their reason or

judgement, for it gives no clues regarding the method followed by historians. The writer of school textbooks of history simply conjures up images of great individuals or scenes of political drama. This magical character of school history promotes the formation of poster memory which requires no awareness of time and no analytical reasoning to back it.

The self-image of a 'fighting people' is the basic substance of the biggest memory posters that the school history of the freedom movement attempts to paint. It is when we delve into this common self-image and break it up into two national self-images, that we get the first glimpse of a major structural difference between the Indian and the Pakistani master narratives. In the Indian narrative, the 'fighting people' are identified as the ones who fought against the British. The idea of 'fight' is the conventional one, in which the defeated is forced out of the land where the fight has taken place. This connotation of the 'fight' for freedom can be seen in a substantial part of the story of the national movement written in a capsule form for primary school-children, and in an elaborated version for older ones. The narratology applied in the capsule form presents Congress leaders and the British standing face to face, while the long time-span of the battle shrinks into a handful of episodes that comprise a three-page story. In this highly compressed version served to the primary schoolchild, the story of freedom becomes a string of memory posters depicting dramatic confrontations. These are elaborated when a large number of personalities and events are incorporated in the story written for older children. The essential story remains the same—a revelation of how the British were physically thrown out of the country. They are represented as an exhausting enemy

who is always ready to take recourse to cruel and barbaric means.

The textbooks of both India and Pakistan refrain from explaining that British colonizers were different from earlier conquerors in that they did not intend to stay on in India. The adolescents in middle and secondary classes have a propensity to form general concepts on the basis of limited exposure. It is a serious cognitive challenge for them to recognize that terms like 'ruler' and 'conquest' have a highly specific meaning when they are applied in a colonial context. To meet this challenge, they would need a text carefully designed to include comparative commentary and contextualized details. The bulk of textbook writers in India and Pakistan do not even approach the task. They do not even go so far as to allow their readers to realize how small and demographically insignificant the physical presence of the British was in India. As background information, school historians do tell their readers that the purpose of British rule was to exploit India economically and to subdue it culturally, but this information figures in the history of the pre-nationalist phase of colonial rule. Once the narrative of freedom starts, the exploitative character and practices of colonial rule slip out of focus.

Why did the people of India need to fight such a long and difficult battle against the British? The answer one can decipher in both Indian and Pakistani textbooks is: because the British were foreigners or outsiders. The school books of both countries agree on the point that 'we' fought against the British because they were British. The narrative of freedom gives far more importance to the foreignness of the British as the reason why Indians had to fight against them than to the role of the British colonial rule in India's impoverishment. The idea of British foreignness is simple

and true; and therein lies its strength. However, conceding the obvious truth of this idea amounts to permitting the narrative of freedom to slip into a deep repertoire of cultural archetypes that govern the popular understanding of India's long history and continuous identity. As part of an uninterrupted story of India since ancient times, the freedom struggle becomes just one more episode featuring a battle with outsiders. Neither Indian nor Pakistani school historians are able to take along the young reader towards developing a conceptual or 'formal'—in a Piagetian sense—understanding of colonialism. Indeed, the textbook authors of both countries seldom rise above the tendency to represent a vivid and mostly personified battle between the Indians and the British. Such a representation inevitably denigrates the status of the freedom movement in the annals of national history, obfuscating its distinctive character and social aims.¹⁰ In particular, it denigrates the ideal of secular humanism and equality which found expression in the lives and conduct of some of the highly respected minds involved in the freedom struggle.

Beyond the initial commonality of meaning cited above in the self-identity of 'the fighting people' lies the specific connotation it acquires in Pakistani textbooks. It arises from a sense of escape as a result of 'awakening'. The Pakistani school historians intersperse the narrative of freedom with the assertion of an awakening which is quite different from the 'cultural awakening' we read about in Indian textbooks in the context of the nineteenth century. Pakistani textbooks use the term 'awakening' in the sense of becoming aware of a risk or danger. The assertion Pakistani school historians make about this awareness intensifies as they approach the last two decades of the

freedom struggle. 'Awakening' now involves several discrete processes, including consolidation as a political entity and the recognition that Muslims have a distinct destiny to pursue. These elements of 'awakening' came together to form a complex statement on 'why we insisted on Partition?'

Although the Pakistani story of the 'awakening' is a historical story, it is represented to children in a timeless mode. Events that occurred in different epochs and around personalities as different as Shah Waliullah, Syed Ahmad Khan, and Jinnah, are welded together to form an account that makes the 'awakening' of Muslim people in the Indian subcontinent a predestined, stepwise revelation. The heroic glamour that this narrative necessarily imparts to the individuals involved in it makes it a quasi-religious narrative. Running parallel to the political narrative of freedom from colonial rule, it provides an explanation for the urge to seek a formal separation which directed the leadership of the Muslim League in the last two decades of the freedom struggle.

The Pakistani school historian, thus, covers two tracks—one, the gradual unfolding of the vision of 'homeland', and two, the slow political progress towards the realization of that vision. The national memory of Pakistan appears in school texts as a pattern in which the two tracks surface alternately. The young reader's attention is held in a state of balance between the two. It is a neat balance; but if we observe it hermeneutically, it seems to tilt in favour of the second, i.e. the political track. The search for a Muslim 'homeland' provides a grand scenery serving as a background to the painstaking work of politician-fighters. 'Why' they had to fight so hard to achieve their goal forms the gist of the story. The implied young reader of the story must learn that though a vision existed, it attained clarity only

during the time spent on hard political effort. The effort proved hard because the alternative ways of achieving the vision diminished only gradually.

In conclusion, we can distinguish the Indian and the Pakistani narratives, by saying that the former focuses on 'how' freedom was achieved, while the focus of the latter is on 'why' it had to take the form it did. The Indian narrative is somewhat simpler in its main structure, though its amplitude suggests a hidden complexity. It chooses to project achievements of the Congress under Gandhi's leadership as the central theme, but it makes a consistent attempt to cover the activities of other organizations and their leaders. The Indian narrative does not let its young reader find out that there was no cohesive value-orientation in the struggle for freedom; that, in fact, different organizations and leaders had sharply distinct value-preferences though their ideals looked similar. The generous, accommodating nature of the Indian narrative stops short of granting legitimacy to just one organization and its vision—the Muslim League. The story of the League is jettisoned early from the master narrative of India's freedom. Though the Pakistani narrative has just this one organization to cover, it acquires a complexity too, on account of its compulsive intertwining of the League's politics with the 'awakening' of Muslims. The narrative uses the two strands to justify why the League's leadership had to separate itself from the strategies and the vision that drove the Congress.

6

A Beginning Located

The revolt of 1857 has elements that make it a perfect pedagogic choice for a formal beginning of the narrative of the freedom struggle. The remarkable pedagogic opportunity it offers has as much to do with its placement in the record of the freedom struggle as with its content. Given the controversy surrounding its nature, we may well ask whether it marks the beginning of India's struggle for independence or only of its narrative. As far as school textbooks are concerned, the answer is definitely the former; and it is even more so as far as Pakistani textbooks are concerned. School textbooks used in both countries convey the impression that the rebels were inspired by a dream of national independence. Hardly any text directly cautions children about the use of terms like 'national' and 'nationalist' in the context of 1857. What is true about the teaching of history in general applies to this episode too,

namely, that it is represented without reference to the nuanced meaning that the words needed for the representation may have had at the time.

Most textbooks used in India and Pakistan present 1857 as an obvious beginning of the freedom movement. The precise content of its representation may differ, but the general message is clear. In the Indian case, the naming of Class VIII and Class XII textbooks of history as 'Modern India' ensures that the young reader will perceive the rebellion of 1857 as an event securely embedded in the contemporary phase of India's history. In fact, Indian textbooks start the history of 'modern' India as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. No explanation is offered for either the naming or the choice of date. The child is expected to infer that the birth of 'modern India' can be seen in the decline of the Mughal empire, which started at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The subtext of this naming is that 'European penetration' (the title of Chapter 2 in the Class XII NCERT textbook) served as the instrument of India's entry into the modern era. The label 'modern India' also fits well with the distribution of the content of history as a subject over the middle school classes. Under that distribution, 'ancient India' is covered in Class VI, 'medieval India' in Class VII, and 'modern India' in Class VIII.

On the face of it, the message that 'modern India' arose out of the decline of the Mughal empire and as a result of India's colonization, looks like common sense. Changes in social and administrative institutions, and social reforms during the 'social and cultural awakening' of the first half of the nineteenth century are presented as aspects of India's modernization that took place against the backdrop of colonial control. In this general map of 'progress', the

revolt of 1857 is a bit of a puzzle. Its surface features are as simple and clear as a textbook lesson, but its meaning is remarkably uncertain, making it a matter of interpretation. The surface features look so simple and predictable that it is not surprising to find an identical structure of the chapter on 1857 in different textbooks. It is neatly divided into four parts: the general causes of the revolt, the immediate cause, the main incidents, and the causes of failure. As a chapter in a textbook and as a lesson taught in a class, no other episode of Indian history has such symmetry. Yet, underneath this symmetry lies the uncertainty of interpretation and obvious difficulties in framing the revolt within the narrative of the national movement.

Some of the senior-level textbooks acknowledge that 1857 is a subject of great controversy among historians, but hardly any textbook gives children a chance to make sense of that controversy. No textbook mentions R.C. Majumdar's contention that there was an 'absence of nationalism' in the revolt of 1857.¹ The controversy Majumdar started by dissociating himself from the official assignment to write a nationalistic account of the revolt is generally ignored by school historians. S. Roy's textbook for high school students of West Bengal mentions R.C. Majumdar, but confines the reference to his view that the Mutiny was started by the sepoys and later got some popular support. We only get a hint of that controversy from the alternative titles used in textbooks for the chapter on 1857. Some textbooks choose to call it 'the revolt of 1857'; others call it 'the first war of independence'.

Textbooks which call the revolt of 1857 the 'first war of independence' see no problem in contextualizing it in the 'national struggle for freedom'. The UP state textbook for high schools says: 'The revolt advanced the political

awakening of Indian people, and movements for social reform and modernisation had already begun.' Apparently, the textbook writer sees no contradiction between the politics of the revolt and the social reforms that were taking place at the time. Ironically, the commonly discussed 'causes' of the revolt include the very attitudes and beliefs that social reform movements were trying to change. Only the NCERT texts for Classes VIII and XII make an attempt to represent the incidents of 1857 as a complex interplay of political and social forces. Both these prominent textbooks desist from using the term 'national' in the context of 1857. The Class VIII text by Dev and Dev says that 'no such groups had emerged in society as would fight for radical changes in social and economic life, and cement the bonds of national unity among the people'. In his Class X NCERT textbook, however, Arjun Dev says that 'the revolt made the Indian people more politically conscious than before'. What 'politics' might mean in a mid-nineteenth century context is not explained. It is in the Class XII NCERT text by Bipan Chandra that we find an attempt to analyse the different strands of opinion and ideology, and to establish an imaginative symmetry to overcome any confusion that might arise in the young reader's mind. The endeavour deserves to be examined in some detail.

Although Bipan Chandra avoids calling the revolt a 'war of independence', he does not mind calling it a 'revolutionary war'. It became one, he says, when the rebels proclaimed the aged and powerless Bahadur Shah Zafar the emperor of India. By this act, they recognized 'the fact that the long reign of the Mughal dynasty had made it the traditional symbol of India's political unity'. With this single gesture, Chandra says, 'the sepoys had transformed a mutiny of soldiers into a revolutionary war'.

This decisive judgement on 1857 can only be interpreted in the context of the tensions prevailing within Indian historiography on the question of how the long period of Mughal rule should be represented—as a process of India's unification or as a reminder of India's weaknesses and enslavement? The rebellion of 1857 offers a tempting opportunity to the school historian who wishes to use secularism as an organizing idea of nationalist history. Ironically, the revolt also forces the school historian to accept the role of religious beliefs and practices in inspiring people for collective action. Chandra's text confronts this duality when he tries to explain the response of educated Indians. He spells out and justifies their antipathy to the rebellion by recalling the rebels' opposition to progressive social measures. Yet, the educated class of Indians is described as being 'mistaken' because it believed that British rule could modernize India. The rebels, by comparison, are said to be more 'far-sighted', possessing an 'instinctive' understanding that foreign rule was bad. At the same time, Chandra goes on to add: 'It cannot be said that the educated Indians were anti-national or loyal to a foreign regime.' Don't the post-1858 events show that the educated Indians led a powerful anti-British movement, the text asks.

As we can see, Chandra's text assumes the character of an interior monologue. He recognizes that both support and opposition to the revolt cannot be neatly classified, yet he wants to ensure that the rebellion serves as a formal beginning of the narrative of India's national freedom. Recalcitrant aspects of the rebellion are assiduously smoothened to allow this to happen. The use of categories like 'the rebels' and the 'educated Indians' is one such smoothening manoeuvre. It does not work as well as the

narrator might have wished because information about the social origins of rebel leaders contradicts the attribution to them of an 'instinctive' understanding. If the young reader were to imagine that the decaying feudal classes possessed better instinctive understanding than did the embryonic educated middle class, such a view would upturn the conceptual infrastructure of Bipan Chandra's textbook. The text ties itself in knots as it attempts to apportion 'progressive' and 'backward' motives to the great diversity of the actors of 1857 and to those who did not join the action. Ultimately, after pursuing a tortuous course of description and argument, the text passes its verdict on the revolt of 1857: 'Though it was a desperate effort to save India in the old way and under traditional leadership, it was the first great struggle of the Indian people for freedom from British imperialism.'

Other Indian textbooks avoid this kind of long-winded route of analysis. Some of them quote Savarkar to say that it was the first war of independence; others use Nehru to similar effect, although Nehru had called it 'essentially a feudal rising' with 'some nationalistic elements in it'.² Children are simply not allowed to realize that the incidents of 1857 look remarkably different from different perspectives. No Indian textbook utilizes the pedagogic challenge that 1857 presents for exploring a moment of the past as a historian would. An opportunity to investigate the revolt of 1857 in this manner might involve an inquiry into the effects of technological development, especially the technology of communication and transport. Alternatively, it might inspire children to study the geography of colonial expansion. Representations of 1857 in literature could form yet another avenue of inquiry. Above all else, the portrayal of 1857 has a great potential

to introduce children to the importance of multiple readings and the recognition of ambiguity as an aspect of historical enquiry. School histories foreclose all these options by offering a cut and dried story of the movement, encased in a historical allegory of nationalism. The dramatic eruption and progress of the revolt, the violence and the tragedy associated with it, and the mystery of its organization disappear in the version that children are required to read and accept as they begin the study of India's struggle against colonial rule. Perhaps no school historian would accept what Tapti Roy has to say at the end of her study of 1857 in Bundelkhand: 'whether the uprising of 1857 was retrograde or forward-looking seems a non-question'.³ Such a view—which opens up the possibility of examining 1857 as history, rather than as a lesson—would be totally out of character with the prevailing concept of children's education and the role of history in it.

In Pakistani textbooks we find the school historians facing a different kind of challenge, though, superficially, the problems look similar. Most authors take the 'war of independence' line, thereby assigning to the revolt a formal place in the narrative of Pakistan's independence and birth. The structure of the chapter covering the revolt has the same four parts that it has in Indian textbooks, though the treatment is remarkably sketchy. The main difference between the Pakistani and the Indian treatment lies in the emphasis placed on the role of Muslims in the former. The revolt is presented as a brave attempt by the Muslims to throw the British out of India and re-establish Mughal rule. Emphasis is laid on the British perception of Muslims as the main threat in India. Sacrifices made by Muslim rulers and others are represented as evidence of the British prejudice against Muslims and Islam. The revolt of 1857, thus, serves to frame the study of Pakistan's birth in the

longer story of Mughal power in India. The brief account of the revolt that textbooks provide focuses the young student's attention on the pre-existence of a unified Muslim community which was willing to fight for its rights and status.

This general picture of the treatment of the revolt of 1857 in Pakistani texts applies more accurately to junior-level books than it does to high school- or intermediate-level textbooks. For instance, Arshad's textbook for the Class VIII children of English-medium schools in Sind shows no hesitation in calling the revolt 'a last attempt' made by the Muslims to rout the British when everything else had failed. While summing up the chapter on 1857, this book says categorically that 'the war of independence was a well-organised political movement'. Claims of this kind are absent in senior-level books, some of which acknowledge the eruptive and disorderly nature of the revolt. The listing of heroes also changes from junior to higher level textbooks. Mangal Pandey and the Rani of Jhansi, for example, are mentioned in some of the junior-level books, but are absent from texts for senior students. The popular intermediate-level textbook by Rabbani and Sayyid says that 'Hindus and other nations' also participated in the rebellion, but the only name it mentions is that of Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was made 'the supreme commander of the freedom fighters'. Similarly, M.D. Zafar's textbook finds no room for the names of the 1857 heroes although it retains 'war of independence' as the title of its extremely brief section on the rebellion.

Two Dilemmas

Apparently, the authors of senior-level Pakistani school texts are aware of the dilemmas that 1857 presents as a

major event in the history of the subcontinent. One dilemma has its origins in the fact of the dual role that any pedagogic narrative of freedom must serve in Pakistan. Apart from describing how colonial rule ended, the narrative must also explain how Pakistan came into being. This second imperative has led many school historians and others in Pakistan to assemble a remarkably long background for the Pakistan Movement which took shape in the final decade and a half of the national movement for freedom. The revolt of 1857 disturbs such an enterprise. Any elaborate treatment of 1857 would necessitate the recognition that Hindus and Muslims were quite capable of fighting as a unified force. Pakistan's post-1977 curricular policies pose a serious constraint for this recognition. These policies have evolved in the context of a beleaguered state which chose the teaching of religion and the writing of history as two pedagogic instruments for consolidating its hold. The state's perspective on Pakistan's history forbids the authors of school textbooks from attaching any significance to examples of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Writers of junior-level textbooks overcome this constraint by recourse to brevity. The Punjab Textbook Board's social studies text for Class VIII written by Shamim and Ahmed covers the entire narrative of the Pakistan Movement in fifteen pages. This narrative begins with a terse reminder of the implications of 1857:

The British had not forgotten the War of Independence waged by the Muslims against them. The Hindus had never forgiven the Muslims for having ruled India for centuries. Therefore, both the communities conspired against the Muslims to turn them into a poor, helpless and ineffective minority.

This remarkable opening gambit enables the writers of the text to construct a firm outer frame of the story which they want fourteen-year-olds to learn, of how the Muslims rose from the depths of depression, reorganized themselves, and eventually succeeded in establishing their separate homeland. A highly compressed story does not allow the listener to ask for details; its aim is to impress and indoctrinate, rather than to explain. A selective listing of facts enables the narrator to do just that. The details of 1857 are irrelevant for this capsule version of how Pakistan came into being. We can hardly charge this version with being irresponsible in the use of general categories like 'the Hindus' and 'the Muslims' as sentient actors. Given its purpose, and the official mandate to attain that purpose by any means, the text has no choice. To say that it is a false text is to miss the role it is supposed to perform—to clear a nation's memory of facts and details its present-day state finds unsettling and unnecessary.

The use of brevity as a means to erase recalcitrant facts is not available to the senior-level text writer to the same extent as it is to the school historian writing for younger children. Pakistani school historians who have written about the freedom struggle for high school and intermediate classes and for the 'O' level are apparently aware of the dilemmas that the rebellion of 1857 presents as a historical event. One dilemma—the irrelevance of religious categories for differentiating between the participants of the rebellion—is obvious enough. Though religious beliefs and practices were among the sources of inspiration for the revolt, the specific religious identity of the rebels was not important in determining their behaviour as far as we know. The writer of a Pakistani textbook does face a problem representing such an event within the ideological framework

of the subject called 'Pakistan Studies'. The listing of Hindu heroes who fought in the 1857 battles is only part of the challenge; the real challenge is to acknowledge that there was a time when Hindus and Muslims spontaneously fought side by side. The aim of 'Pakistan Studies', to historicize Muslim separatism, cannot be met by letting such a past be represented for its own sake.

A second source of dilemma lies in the structure of the narrative itself, in the need to prepare the student for the post-1857 developments in Muslim politics. In his extensive critique of Pakistan's school textbooks, K.K. Aziz describes this dilemma quite bluntly: 'Here is a conundrum for the textbooks' writers. If it was a war of independence waged by the Muslims against the hated British foreigner, how can Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who sided with the British and condemned the native rising, be presented to the students as a "great hero" and "the greatest thinker of Pakistan?"'⁴ Although it is hard to establish that writers of school textbooks worry about internal consistency, Aziz's reasoning does provide an explanation for the sketchy treatment that senior-level Pakistani textbook writers give to the rebellion of 1857. The only exceptions are the texts written by J. Hussain and F. Bajwa for 'O' level students. These two textbooks apply a more sophisticated approach to the teaching of history at school than any other textbook used in Pakistan. Neither of them attempts to represent the revolt of 1857 as a coherent attempt to win freedom, although Bajwa does use the 'war of independence' title. Regarding Bahadur Shah Zafar's leadership, Bajwa clarifies that Zafar 'had little idea of what was happening and had no power to stop or start a war'. Hussain uses the title 'the great revolt', and deftly intersperses her report on regional narratives of the revolt with the general issues that led to it.

The Pakistani school historians do not share the dilemma their Indian counterparts face in accommodating the revolt of 1857 in the story of social modernization. This is mainly because Pakistani text writers want their readers to associate social awakening and modern education with the post-1857 period of Indo-Pak history, especially with the personality and efforts of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. For the Indian text writers, the revolt of 1857 comes after the beginning of modern education and the initiatives of social reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy. An old official history of 'Hind-Pakistan', published by the Pakistan Historical Society in 1955, describes Roy as one of the 'enlightened Hindus' who supported Bentinck's efforts for social reform. In later textbooks of Pakistan, the theme of social reform and spread of education was deferred until the post-1857 period. The revolt itself was seen squarely as a last-ditch effort by Muslims to re-establish their power. This interpretation has persisted since the 'Hind-Pakistan' history composed in the first decade of Pakistan's existence. Its authors had said: 'The war of Independence, which has often been wrongly described as Mutiny, was the culminating stage in the century-old struggle of the Muslims to free themselves from the domination of the foreigners.'⁵

We can conclude this comparison by recalling a basic similarity between the Indian and Pakistani versions of 1857. It lies in the treatment of the rebellion as the formal opening of the narrative of freedom. Unlike endings, which in the case of narratives of the freedom struggle, are non-negotiable, beginnings imply a discovery and a sense of judgement. To attribute the status of a 'beginning' to an event is to signify it as a breakthrough. The very fact that the revolt ended in failure suggests that it did not constitute a breakthrough. Any search for causes of the revolt leads

us to a world that was in the process of disintegration. Percival Spear, in his assessment of the significance of 1857 to modern India, describes it as 'a last convulsive movement of protest against the coming of the west on the part of traditional India'.⁶ Its effects on the course of future events were major—both in terms of British attitudes and measures, and for Indian responses to British rule. Though the revolt was to serve as a great memory and source of inspiration in the subsequent struggle for India's freedom, it is hard to say that it was in any logical sense related to this struggle. Yet, as the opening scene of the narrative of the freedom movement, the revolt places a defining stamp on the nature of the narrative. The stamp carries its own character as a dramatic, spontaneous occurrence, a collage of face-to-face battles. As we shall see in the following chapters of this study, the narrative of freedom in Indian, and to a great extent in Pakistani, textbooks maintains this stamp of 1857 to the end. The stamp allows quite a few textbook authors in both countries to avoid engaging with the broader socio-cultural dimensions of history, focused as they remain on a unilinear course of events and a handful of heroes.

Some other features of the narrative also take root in this opening scene. The flow of time is marked by a series of dramatic events. As the story of the freedom struggle progresses, it encourages the young reader to anticipate dramatic happenings. Periods when nothing dramatic occurs seem to shrink or vanish into a time warp. Towards the final decade of the struggle, the Pakistani narrative gets rid of this stamp of 1857, but the Indian narrative marches on in the shadow of this early battle. Another feature that both Indian and Pakistani narratives maintain is the avoidance of personal experience as a source of learning about the past. The year 1857 presents us with a remarkable

range of individual personalities which can be studied as a resource for better understanding of the contemporary social climate. Textbooks offer to their young readers a visual impression of some of these personalities, without any interesting biographical details that might help children to relate to them. They remain literally like deities selected to inhabit a pantheon. Neutral witnesses and critics must stay outside the pantheon. One such person was Ghalib whose personality and experience could provide children with a unique view of the year 1857. Barring S.F. Mahmud, no school historian in Pakistan or India so much as mentions Ghalib. As a critic of the rebellion, and as someone who tried hard to retain British patronage, Ghalib has no place in the story of 1857 as an episode of the freedom struggle, though he was a great personality of his times and is regarded as a poet of universal repute.⁷

Though the chapter on 1857 ends in every textbook with a discussion of the changes that took place after the revolt in British policy and attitude towards Indians, and with a few sentences thrown in about the inspirational value the revolt had for Indians, this discussion barely manages to connect the revolt with later history. Why this should be so has an obvious reason that we can find in the account of the revolt itself if we view it from a young reader's perspective. The standard account is much too interpretative to allow children to relate to it. And when it mentions the involvement of individuals, the style is inevitably one of hero-worship. Though any reader can see that the rebels had no other means to express themselves except through violence, and that the British were brutal and unscrupulous in suppressing the revolt, the scale of violence that took place remains vague. The drastic measures that were taken after the revolt to physically reorganize

the neighbourhood of the Delhi Red Fort, and the astounding number of people who were given the death sentence for their suspected antipathy to the British, find no reflection in school histories of either India or Pakistan.⁸ India's National Book Trust brought out a few years ago, a simplified version of Khwaja Husain Nizami's remarkable accounts of the suffering that members of Delhi's royal families, particularly the princesses, went through.⁹ As historical narratives of an era which lies far across India's long political struggle for independence, Nizami's stories can greatly help present-day children to see the revolt of 1857 in human terms. So can Kipling's *The Undertakers*, written from a British perspective.¹⁰ Introduction to such material would give children a much needed entry point into a chapter of the freedom struggle which carries little resemblance to anything that happened after it.

Awakening and Anxiety

The revolt of 1857 influenced the course of history, both as a source of inspiration for Indians, and as a turning point in British policy. The memory of the revolt was glorified into a national saga throughout the long freedom struggle. How the 'spirit of freedom' that is associated with the revolt in nearly every textbook used in India and Pakistan evolved into a national consciousness is a question that puts the narratology of freedom under strain. To begin with, the formation of consciousness is not the kind of topic that the narrative which begins with the revolt of 1857 can conveniently accommodate and handle. Both in content and character, the topic of national consciousness contrasts sharply with the revolt of 1857. The movements for social and cultural reform that arose in different regions and communities constitute the content of this consciousness. Chronologically, some of the major

movements predate the revolt of 1857, and it is not clear what role, if any, they played in inspiring the revolt or in shaping its course. Most textbook accounts of the nineteenth century contextualize these movements in the educational initiatives taken by the colonial administration. Apart from education, certain specific measures, like the banning of Sati, taken by colonial administrators to reform Indian society, are also mentioned. The impact of changes in trade and transport, and the general advancement of industrial technologies also induced social reform and heightened the desire to be governed in a responsible manner. Advances in technology, particularly printing and transport, are directly related to the evolution of a new mental geography which has direct relevance for the study of early nationalist consciousness in many societies, including India. Textbooks in both countries take note of this evolution, but seldom relate it to socio-economic and political developments.

This complex interplay of ideas and material changes would present a challenge for any narrative design. In the case of the narrative of freedom, the challenge becomes harder because the children who study the freedom struggle as history during the middle and higher classes would already have been exposed to the narrative design in their primary classes. That previously studied narrative, concise and whole as historical stories served in childhood usually are, ends up serving like an outline in which the study of history in later classes fills the details. Even Class IV and V textbooks in India and Pakistan attempt to convey to children a notion of nineteenth-century reform movements. Without exception, they neglect the difficulty which children face in grasping the abstractions underlying routinely used terms like 'tradition', 'progress' and 'reform'. One can hardly expect that this exposure to the ideational

developments of the nineteenth century makes any sense to primary school-children. This is just another example of the tendency an Indian committee on curricular burden has described by saying that 'a lot is taught, but little is learnt'.¹ In the case of Pakistan, the aim of this early exposure to the discussion of national awakening is rather different. The curriculum document, published by the Ministry of Education in the late 1980s, explicitly states that one of the aims of social studies in Class V is to impart the ability to 'understand the Hindu and Muslim differences and the resultant need for Pakistan'.² In all probability, the attainment of such a purpose is not left solely in the hands of the social studies teacher, and we cannot say how much difference the teacher or the textbook actually makes to the shaping of children's attitudes.

The point is that in both India and Pakistan the learning of history in the upper primary or middle classes takes place with reference to an earlier exposure to the story of freedom and to the reform movements of the nineteenth century. Syllabus and textbook designers seem to take advantage of young children's cognitive difficulty in grasping abstractions. Telling a linear story of the struggle against the British—starting with 1857—proves far easier than explaining the ideas and dilemmas of nineteenth century reformers in a communicative manner. Gender and caste were the two basic themes on which many of the reform movements pushed forward. Giving children details of the oppression of women by men and that of the lower castes by the upper castes may well be incompatible with common perceptions of what is appropriate knowledge for children. It is far easier and tempting to tell the story of how people collectively fought against foreign oppressors. Apart from its apparent suitability for children, such a

story also allows widely shared middle-class values and sentiments concerning gender and caste to remain unhurt and unchallenged.

These problems are typical of a curriculum policy which treats the child merely as a recipient of knowledge. Such a policy organizes the appropriate subject matter in suitable doses, providing for an arbitrary enhancement of the size of the dose each time it is to be served. Repetition is assumed to be necessary for ensuring that eventually the child will acquire at least some of the desired knowledge. The problems of representation one finds in most Indian textbooks when they deal with the long, post-1857 era of 'early nationalism' can be attributed to this kind of curriculum policy. Indifference to the child's own intellectual effort, and to the manner in which children approach social and historical knowledge, is inherent in this policy. Why this indifference matters especially for the 'early nationalism' phase, and more for Indian school historians than for their Pakistani counterparts, are interesting questions. The first question can be resolved right away, but the second one must wait for a substantial discussion of the Pakistani master narrative of the post-1857 period.

The second half of the nineteenth century presents a special problem to the school historian of the freedom struggle because in terms of a listing of events, very little happens during this period that can be linked up with the revolt of 1857 in a narrative sequence. The nature of the content that the writers of textbooks must deal with in this period is very different from the revolt, which is supposed to have inaugurated the struggle for freedom. It constitutes a history of ideas rather than events, and it requires a synthesis of information about changes occurring in several discrete spheres of social and economic life.

Indian textbooks usually carry an elaborate chapter discussing the economic and cultural changes that took place in the latter half of the nineteenth century. However, this chapter usually comes before the one on the revolt of 1857. Many text writers allow the prose to drift back and forth across the century, sometimes foreshadowing the arrival of Gandhi in 1915, and at other times going back to Raja Rammohan Roy in the space of a few sentences. The organizing idea of this free-hand mapping of the nineteenth century renaissance is 'cultural awakening'. This term is used as a shorthand for intellectual currents so diversified and complex in themselves that no definitive description may be applicable to them. School historians attempt to provide precisely such a description, which makes learning, in the sense of comprehension, rather than familiarity with facts, difficult.

The Class VIII NCERT text, for example, says that the nineteenth century reformers 'were deeply influenced by the ideas of rationalism and humanism and of human equality'. The thirteen-year-olds who read this text have no direct means of examining this attribution of an intellectual lineage to the different reform movements. The text itself makes no attempt to elucidate terms like 'humanism' and 'rationalism', let alone explain what they might mean in the context of a colonized society. The Maharashtra state textbook gives a still longer list of terms, including 'individualism', apart from 'liberty' and 'fraternity' to characterize the ingredients of the urge that leaders of the Indian renaissance had for 'transforming India into a modern nation'.

Magic of Education

These versions of what happened in the nineteenth century project a sharp bifurcation between the cultural and the

political. This is how they succeed in isolating the 1857 revolt from what happened before and after it. As one reads the chapter on 'cultural awakening' in text after text, one recognizes the mutation that colonialism goes through when the reader's attention is confined to the orbit of cultural meanings. Colonialism, especially colonial education, becomes something benign and glowing, a quasi-divine means of exposing Indians to the wealth of European knowledge and ideas. The short and self-contained story of 1857—sitting a chapter later or a chapter earlier in the different versions—is not supposed to disturb the magical atmosphere of cultural awakening. Social issues take the lead here; economic and political history is put aside, to be picked up again when new heroes like Dadabhai Naoroji appear. Nowhere else can we see as clearly as we see here the role of the school historian as a magician who conjures up images and faces without giving children a chance to ask for proof of their veracity. The magician transforms the colonial presence into a benevolent vehicle for good and necessary ideas with one hand, and with the other he transforms culture into nascent politics, thereby permitting socio-cultural reforms to become foundations of nationalism.

Young readers and their teachers who might seek to make sense of these images are referred to the transformative potential of education. How education enabled a supposedly backward people to experience a deep stirring, and enhanced cultural self-confidence is the most amazing side-story of the master narrative of freedom. If colonial rulers needed a magical wand to exonerate them from their numerous excesses, school historians have given them one. Examples of how this is done may differ in the quality of writing, but every text makes the same basic point. The state textbook for Class VIII children in Gujarat makes the point quite bluntly:

Some forces that went into the making of new India were born in the nineteenth century. Western education and the intellectual activities that sprang from it were the prime forces . . . Under Macaulay's recommendation Governor-General William Bentinck passed a law in 1853 (sic) that the Company Government will give encouragement to English language and science. After that English education began at government level. In India, a new educated class had emerged. English language and literature inculcated in the minds of newly educated class of youngsters modern thoughts of freedom, equality, brotherhood and scientific way of thinking. As a result they got inspired to bring to an end the British rule in India by abolishing blind beliefs, superstitions and evil customs.³

Relatively more sober tributes to colonial education can be found in the Class VIII NCERT text which takes care to recognize that 'though only a small number of people benefitted from this education, it played an important role in bringing some of the advanced ideas of the western world and of modern science to India'. The Class XII NCERT text has a somewhat more balanced explanation which distributes the sources of cultural awakening into several discrete domains of material and cultural interaction with Europe, including education, but the basic format of the interpretation is the usual one. The readers of this text are four years older than the ones to whom the junior NCERT text is addressed: yet, it takes no advantage of their maturer minds to represent the 'growth of new India' in a more comprehensible and reasoned manner. It follows all other Indian texts in constructing an anachronistic image of the nineteenth century reformers and intellectual

leaders. According to the image, they were filled with the desire to adapt their society to the requirements of the modern world of science, democracy, and nationalism. How a student of Class XII who has opted for history would reconcile this picture of the 'world' with his or her knowledge of mid-nineteenth century Europe is apparently not a concern of any relevance for the narration of Indian nationalism.

The primary importance attributed to education and to the socio-cultural reforms that it supposedly inspired has a distinct nation-building role which is not generally paid much attention. To examine this role one must sit in a class where the post-1857 segment of the history of the freedom struggle is being taught. As the teacher tells the children what the textbook says, the classroom discourse spontaneously moves forward to the present. Ritual and superstition, and oppressive caste and community norms, are presented as issues of a distant past. A rational, scientific outlook and a commitment to equality appear like old dreams fulfilled in the nineteenth century, long before the birth of a modern and free nation. The ahistorical and blatantly misleading discussion of colonial education enables urban, middle-class students, preparing now for the impending CBSE examination, to distance themselves from the reality of their own education and the larger reality of a caste-ridden democracy battling with communal forces.⁴ The teacher acts as a collaborator in heightening the 'feel-good' effect of the history lesson about the nineteenth century by occasionally reminding children that certain key objectives of those early social reforms are still relevant for rural inhabitants. That hint allows spatial distancing of the urban student while the text itself manoeuvres the distance of time.

This kind of a long handshake with the past is even more obvious in Pakistani textbooks, and there it has an explicitly stated political purpose. The account of post-1857 developments presented to Pakistani children in most textbooks is focused on the role of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh Movement. The long interregnum between the revolt and the founding of the Muslim League in 1906 is covered solely by a brief biography of Syed Ahmad and a description of his views and work. The Punjab state textbook of social studies for Class VIII has no room for a biographical account of Sir Syed, but it takes his perspective in summarizing the post-1857 social ethos. The description gives us a valuable insight into the Pakistani master narrative of freedom:

The Hindus soon learnt the English language, adopted the Western style of living and occupied important government posts. Then the events took a new turn. Hindus who had received Western education in England or some other countries of Europe formed in connivance with the British rulers a political party called the Indian National Congress which aimed at sharing power with the British in ruling India. They were successful in their plans. But Muslims were losers and so when councils were set up, they were left out. The ruling British sensed this and felt concerned because the Muslims did not get adequate representation.⁵

A few lines later, the text tells children that the 'Congress was an overwhelmingly Hindu body' and that Syed Ahmad Khan advised the Indian Muslims to stay away from it.

Two features of this description are endemic to the narratology of freedom that we find in most Pakistani

textbooks. One is the construction of categories like 'the Hindus' and 'the Muslims'. Formed by lumping together millions of people, such categories serve to create stereotypes which can be conveniently invoked for the arousal of hatred or empathy. It is true that terms like 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' are used in Indian textbooks too, and the connotations they carry are equally prone to stereotyping. However, Pakistani text writers use such terms as instruments of a purposeful demonology, as Rubina Saigol has pointed out.⁶ As the narrative advances towards the 1930s, 'the Hindus' are given certain essential, unalienable properties which are supposedly part of their nature. At that point they become a cruel, manipulative, and unreliable race. It is interesting that the demonology develops so rapidly after the representation of the 1857 revolt, in which the Hindus and Muslims fought together.

The second key feature of the description quoted earlier is the choice of 'connivance' to characterize the imputed relationship between Hindus and the British. The idea that there was a tacit understanding between Hindu leaders and British administrators runs through the Pakistani master narrative of the freedom struggle all the way to Partition. Barring exceptions like the books written by Bajwa and Hussain for 'O' level students, this explicit hint at a conspiracy against Muslims is found in just about every textbook account of the anti-colonial struggle written for the young, especially for the very young. The idea that, as a whole, the Muslims were in deep trouble from early on, that they had a narrow escape in the ultimate round, apparently serves more than a political purpose in the national memory transmitted to school-going children. It belongs to the infrastructure of the official psyche, and in children's textbooks it assumes the function of an

architectural foundation for the reverence with which children are taught to regard the great leaders who enabled Muslims to escape their fate as victims of the Hindu conspiracy. Syed Ahmad Khan is represented as being one of them.

Syed Ahmad Khan

Most of the Pakistani books included in my sample discuss Syed Ahmad Khan's biography and contribution at great length. He is presented as both a visionary and a man of action. Unlike Indian textbooks where he figures as one of the many social reformers of the nineteenth century, Pakistani textbooks portray him as a solitary figure who was way ahead of his times. As Hussain puts it, 'he had a deeper understanding of the realities of the new situation after 1857'.

Although several aspects of Syed Ahmad's life and work are covered, three themes stand out: one, his conciliatory view of the British; two, his caution against representative democracy and the Congress; and three, his institutional work to promote Western education among Muslims. In a general sense, the prominence given to these three aspects by Pakistani school historians appears to make the Pakistani portrayal of Syed Ahmad Khan similar to the Indian one. However, on taking a closer look, we find that the Pakistani representation of Syed Ahmad is aimed at pulling him out of historical time in order to establish him in a theoretical frame, which hangs free of history. Pakistani children studying in elite English-medium schools and preparing for their 'O' level examination are spared this ahistorical view of Syed Ahmad. The mainstream student, however, receives a picture which, although composed of familiar biographical details, conveys an altogether different impression and message.

One part of the message is that Syed Ahmad Khan was the propounder of the two-nation theory on which Pakistan is based. 'The entire freedom movement', says the textbook by Rabbani and Sayyid, 'revolved around the two-nation theory which was introduced by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.' The authors elaborate on this opening remark of the subsection on 'Two Nation Theory' by explaining that Syed Ahmad did not originally believe in this theory, but arrived at it as a result of his experience. Students are told that Syed Ahmad, in fact, saw India as one nation, and was 'open-minded', 'large hearted' and a 'staunch patriot'; but his bitter experience of the Hindus and the Congress compelled him to change his mind.

According to this text, the 'Congress had turned into a pure Hindu body and was working on the lines which would have erased the Muslims completely from the Indian society as a nation.' Syed Ahmad's recognition of the irreconcilability of Hindus and Muslims as a result of his experience, and his failure to bring about a unity between the two serve as a basis for the second message which is about the character of Hindu society. Rabbani and Sayyid find this other message in the working of the Congress itself. They say that 'the demands that were projected from the Congress platform appeared very innocent and democratic but actually were aimed at the complete elimination of the Muslims from the Indian society'. Other authors are more direct. For instance, Arshad's textbook for Sind's Class VIII children says that 'the selfish and sectarian attitude of the Hindus brought a change in Syed Ahmad, and he advised the Muslims to stay away from the Congress.'

It is easy to notice that Syed Ahmad Khan is apparently no more than a tool in this kind of historiography.

Though verbally represented as a great man, he serves merely as a means to stigmatize the Congress in the minds of Pakistani children. The full instrumental value of Syed Ahmad goes beyond this, for the stigma attached to the Congress is, in fact, intended to stereotype the Hindus as a selfish and sectarian people. This extended demonology is accomplished at the expense of a rational, appreciative grasp of Syed Ahmad's life and personality. The fact that his personal experience was based on the specific events in which he participated, and on his perception of a highly volatile political climate is something that Pakistani children studying the kind of books we have cited are not allowed to see. Ironically, a similar thing happens to children studying Syed Ahmad's life and work in Indian schools. They too receive a tailored view of the man—tailored to suit a different picture of his times. His role is reduced to supplying a Muslim face in the pantheon of nineteenth-century reformers. His face enables the pantheon to acquire a pluralist ambience.

Most Indian textbooks confine their description of Syed Ahmad's role in history to his educational efforts, specifically to his attempt to introduce scientific Western education as a means to weaken the hold of obscurantist ideas on vast sections of the Muslim population. His political ideas are mentioned in very few Indian textbooks. Two such books are the NCERT texts for Classes VIII and XII. The authors of these texts attempt to accommodate a brief description of Syed Ahmad's political views within the short space available for portraying him as a social reformer and pioneer of modern education among Muslims. The junior-level text says that 'he believed, like many other leaders at that time, that Indians were not yet ready to govern themselves and that their interests would be best

served by remaining loyal to the British rule'. The senior-level text by Bipan Chandra also takes this line: 'The time for politics, he said, had not yet come.' However, this text gives its readers a glimpse of the problem that Syed Ahmad's life and work poses to the Indian school historian who wants to give him a place in the nineteenth-century renaissance: Hindus, Parsis and Christians had contributed freely to Syed Ahmad's college at Aligarh, the text says, and reminds us of the fact that out of the seven Indian teachers serving the college in 1898, two were Hindus, one being a professor of Sanskrit. The text now proceeds to the change in Syed Ahmad's attitude: 'However, towards the end of his life, he began to talk of Hindu domination to prevent his followers from joining the rising national movement. This was unfortunate, though basically he was not a communalist. He only wanted the backwardness of the Muslim middle and upper classes to go.'

Here onwards, the text meanders around Syed Ahmad's choices and beliefs, without touching on the dangers he perceived in representative democracy. His dedication to his college and the difficulties he faced in running it are mentioned, to suggest that his political perspective was shaped mainly by his attempt to protect his college from his orthodox critics. The text continues along this line to pass a judgement:

For the same reason, he would not do anything to offend the government, and, on the other hand, encouraged communalism and separatism. This was, of course, a serious political error which was to have harmful consequences in later years.⁷

The suggestion made in this important Indian textbook—that Syed Ahmad Khan's personality and politics cast a

long shadow on Hindu-Muslim relations—faintly echoes the claim made in Pakistani textbooks that Syed Ahmad Khan was the founder of the two-nation theory which later led to the birth of Pakistan.

The only Pakistani textbook which portrays Syed Ahmad Khan as a man of his time and desists from giving him messianic importance is *An Illustrated History of Pakistan* by J. Hussain. It is also the only Pakistani text to make a specific reference to the criticism that Syed Ahmad faced from orthodox Muslims, including those who advocated pan-Islamism. We find in this book a rounded account of the social and political ethos that prevailed in the north-western area of the subcontinent where Pakistan is situated today. Its portrayal of Syed Ahmad is remarkably sober and frank. One is startled to read, for example, that Syed Ahmad 'probably owed his knighthood to his opposition to the Indian National Congress'. On the role of Syed Ahmad Khan in shaping the idea which later inspired the Pakistan Movement, this carefully crafted text makes an open-ended point:

In visualising Hindus and Muslims parting company to put their respective houses in order, Syed Ahmed revealed a striking premonition of historic developments leading to the creation of Pakistan.⁸

Parties and Politics

The narrative of the freedom struggle goes through a sharp change of terrain as it moves from 'cultural awakening' to organized political activity in its coverage of the last part of the nineteenth century. The shift is no less striking than

the previous one was, from the revolt of 1857 to 'cultural awakening'. The young readers who want to make sense of the shift need new conceptual tools. They must know what terms like 'elites' and 'parties' might mean in the context of the late nineteenth century, before they can grasp the idea of an 'electorate' and the demand for a 'separate electorate'. They also need information about regional demography, an idea of how educational and employment opportunities were distributed, and a map of how far the railways had spread.⁹ They need all this in order to recognize the conditions under which the first episode of formal political activities in India evolved, and also the challenges that it faced. School textbooks of both India and Pakistan deny their readers any access to this kind of information. Even the senior, seventeen-year-old students of Class XII find no such background details in their textbook. They, too, are expected to make the conceptual leap from cultural awakening to political organization with nothing more to rely on than faith in the writer of their textbook. To say that thirteen- or seventeen-year-olds cannot decipher a demographic table or a map would be quite remarkable indeed, considering the kind of problems they are expected to grasp in their mathematics or science class.

It is not surprising that, in the absence of any background material to handle and apply, the student is left to memorize 'facts', such as the date when the Congress was founded and by whom. Both Indian and Pakistani children are required to memorize numerous 'facts' of this kind by way of learning the history of the freedom struggle in the 'moderate' phase of Congress politics. The impression given to the child is that the Congress was 'born' or 'set up' one day like an institution or enterprise.

The child must also come to terms with the fact that the British had a significant role in floating the Congress. When history takes the form of questions like, 'Who founded the Congress and in which year?', we can hardly expect children to grasp the logic behind the emergence of Congress politics.

It is true that a few authors of Indian and Pakistani textbooks try to explain the gradual evolution of the Congress from the regional and all-India associations formed earlier, but in the absence of an exposure to other aspects of post-1857 life in India, especially socio-economic aspects, the explanation does not make much sense. Interestingly, it is a Pakistani author who goes farthest in an attempt to link the appearance of the Congress in the mid-eighties of the nineteenth century with what had been going on for a long time before it. Unfortunately, though quite in keeping with everything else in Pakistani textbooks, this attempt by Sarwar is terribly brief:

The Congress was not the innovation of one man; it was not the creation of a few individuals; or even of a few organizations coming together for a common purpose. It was the culmination of more than half a century's labours put in at different times and in different capacities by men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dwarkanath Tagore and Kristo Das Pal; it was the outcome of sustained work done for decades by public organizations like the British India Association, the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthna Samaj.¹⁰

Instead of elaborating on this abstract and somewhat puzzling account of how the Congress came into being, the text jumps into a discussion of the partition of Bengal. Sarwar's text is not alone in practising this kind of quick

movement. Pakistani school historiography is based on a high degree of selectiveness in the choice of facts. The choice is inspired by an ideological concern, and it mostly ends up being arbitrary. At this point, the narrative moves at a faster pace than the Indian one. The details left out of the narrative have no apparent relevance for the construction of Pakistan's national memory.

Naoroji's critique of India's economic exploitation, the demands made by the moderate leadership of Congress, and the rise of militant nationalist leaders like Tilak receive no attention in Pakistani textbooks. Even Hussain's spacious account bypasses these topics as it traverses the administrative and economic reforms undertaken by the British in the areas which now comprise Pakistan. It is only when she moves to the topic of Bengal's partition that she finds the need to introduce her readers to 'Hindu anti-British militancy'. Farooq Bajwa's text admits that it is 'still unclear' whether the British divided Bengal for political or administrative reasons. His next statement is quite unique in the entire range of Pakistani accounts of this period. The immediate reaction of the move to partition Bengal, Bajwa says, 'divided the Muslims and Hindus clearly along communal lines'. This is among the highly rare glimpses that Pakistani children might get from a textbook about the 'divide and rule' policy of the British.

Indian children, on the contrary, receive frequent reinforcements regarding the role of this theory, starting with the formation of the Muslim League itself. The theory is pressed into service to dispel any possibility of an impression being formed that there might have been objective conditions conducive to the application and splendid success of the 'divide and rule' policy. The UP state textbook for high school students quotes Elphinstone's

reference to the Roman empire for justifying a divide and rule policy by the British in India. The book also mentions the discrimination shown earlier (i.e. after the 1857 revolt) against Muslims in state employment as evidence of a divisive policy. Like many other texts, the UP textbook also attempts to reduce the significance of the Muslim League by reminding the young reader that nationalist Muslims continued to join the Congress. Despite this trend, the text says, Muslims continued to come under an increasing amount of communal influence. Two reasons are given for this: one, the feeling among Muslim leaders belonging to the upper class and the nascent middle class that their economic interests would be hurt if they opposed the British; and two, the fears created in their minds by some of the radical Congress leaders who took a Hindu revivalist line.

On the face of it, this exposition does not look significantly different from how some of the Pakistani textbooks describe the creation of the Muslim League. However, the positive light in which the Pakistani texts place the birth of Muslim League makes their approach quite different. Bajwa's text, for instance, talks about the worrying influence of Hindu revivalist organizations, apart from the controversy concerning Hindi and Urdu. In junior-level Pakistani textbooks, the birth of the Muslim League figures as an event that needs no more justification than that 'the Muslims of India had no political organization of their own' (Punjab, Class VIII). Presented in this manner, the Muslim League steps out of history, assuming the status and role of a quasi-divine mechanism that the Muslims of India had always needed. Texts written for older children make ostensible attempts to contextualize the League's creation. The point that sets their account of the League's

creation sharply apart from the brief mention we find of this event in Indian texts is the former's denial of any British interest or role in widening the Hindu-Muslim gap. Pakistani texts present the formation of the League as the culmination of earlier efforts for social and political awakening. After the Hindu opposition to the partition of Bengal, the Pakistani narrative suggests, Muslims could no more entertain the illusion that the Hindu majority would give them a fair treatment. The Pakistani narrative of freedom structurally depends in its coverage of this period on portraying the Congress as a Hindu organization from the beginning and on highlighting Muslim support for the partition of Bengal.

It is hardly surprising that we find absolutely no trace of Jinnah in Pakistani textbooks at this point. One can imagine that his participation in the 1906 session of the Congress held in Calcutta can hardly be included in the Pakistani account without causing serious damage to the narrative structure at the sensitive point where it announces the birth of the Muslim League. Jinnah had helped Dadabhai Naoroji draft his presidential speech for this session, which called the partition of Bengal 'a bad blunder for England'.¹¹ Suppression of such inconvenient facts, pertaining to the early phase of the political career of the founder of Pakistan, is as crucial for sustaining the Pakistani master narrative of freedom as the construction of a unified, homogenized Muslim political plank. This second imperative implies that textbooks cannot talk about the social origins of the men who took the Simla Deputation and their readiness to let the British pursue their divisive strategies in Bengal and elsewhere. Bajwa's textbook, as an exceptional case, goes against this narrative logic when it explains why the British were not hostile to the League:

A party led by landlords and princes could hardly threaten the British with any physical force and was obviously going to act as a buffer between the British and the Muslims, as well as a constant reminder to the Congress that they had to take Muslim views into account.¹²

Perhaps this explanation is too short to disturb Bajwa's own narrative, but we must appreciate the remarkable effort his textbook makes to relieve school history from the grip of narratology, and not just from the strain of a national ideology. By citing the social origins of the League, this text draws children's attention to the ironical advantage the League enjoyed from the beginning in negotiating with the British.

The Indian narrative too faces a strain in its coverage of the swadeshi movement in Bengal. British objectives in dividing Bengal are established quite forcefully, and the narrative moves on smoothly to portray the anti-Partition campaign in a nationalist framework. The coverage of the mass upsurge foreshadows descriptions of the Gandhi era of the nationalist struggle. The character that the narrative had acquired while covering the 1857 revolt is now reinforced, with the added feature of a democratic ethos surrounding the upsurge this time. School historians seem so committed to this character of the narrative that they do not refer even vaguely to the social origins of the leadership of boycott and swadeshi in Bengal. Nor are they able to show how the ethos facilitated the divisive designs of the British. Even the NCERT textbooks are unable to explain to the young reader the landlord-peasant contradiction which shaped the anti-partition movement. They offer no perspective to the student about the use of the term 'nationalists' in the context of this movement. The Muslim

response to the movement is greatly minimized, and portrayed to suggest that it was fully shaped by the British. It is hardly surprising that these writers ignore Rabindranath Tagore's criticism of the social distance between the landlords and the peasants and his point that 'Satan cannot enter till he finds a flaw.'¹³

It is quite remarkable how narrow a space is available in the Indian narrative of this early episode of the freedom movement for discussing Hindu-Muslim relations and the development of Muslim politics. The case of S. Roy's textbook for high schools in West Bengal illustrates the problem in the extreme. This text permits the narrative to proceed as far as the Lucknow Pact of 1916 before finding a few lines to bring the reader up to date with the trajectory of communal relations and Muslim politics. At the beginning of the long discussion of the partition of Bengal and revolutionary politics, this book refers to religious demography. It quotes Tara Chand's *History of the Freedom Movement in India* to reinforce the point that the division of Bengal was not a response to the Muslim demand or a strategy to improve the backward state of Muslims in the eastern part of Bengal. After this mention, the author virtually forgets about Muslim politics and communal harmony for some thirty pages during which the student is given an elaborate exposure to the protest against partition, the politics of the radical leaders in the Congress, the split in the Congress, the activities of revolutionaries, and then, in a new chapter, the arrival of Gandhi and his Champaran struggle. Finally, when it is time to explain the Lucknow Pact under a separate heading, the writer recalls the need to tell the students about the formation of a party called the Muslim League. Apparently, the League and the demand for a separate electorate are not

integral to the narrative this textbook presents to Bengal's high school students today. A tacit elimination of the Muslim story occurs at the structural level, marking advance acceptance of the creation of East Pakistan in 1947. Since the discussion of the Lucknow Pact requires a mention of the League's creation, it is now mentioned post-facto as an isolated historical fact.

The separation of the League's story from the main narrative of India's freedom is a common feature in school textbooks, and we shall see it continuing all the way to the 1940s when it becomes impossible to keep the two stories apart. The reluctance that Indian school historians display in accommodating even the early part of the League's story in the main narrative of nationalism is hard to explain purely in terms of the logistics of narration. If that was the difficulty, at least one textbook would have overcome it. Perin Bagli's textbook for ICSE students is graphically designed to accommodate many different strands of the narrative. With the help of pictures, box items and highlighted portions within the text, this superbly printed textbook succeeds in accommodating a greater variety of information in the main narrative than any other Indian textbook does. But even this text tells the story of the Muslim League in a separate chapter. Shorter than any other chapter, its four-page account of the League's birth presses the fast-forward button in order to let the student know, while studying the events of 1906, what the League eventually did from 1940 onwards. The fifteen-year-old reader is given no choice: Bagli's text demands a package acceptance of why the League was created, how it grew, and how it succeeded in getting what it wanted. The manner in which the past, the present and the future collapse into one in this construction of knowledge about

the League is strikingly similar to the timelessness which Pakistani textbooks assign to the idea of Pakistan. The judgement implied in this Indian text is, of course, different, but the perspective is identical with what we find in Pakistani texts. The judgement is that the League symbolized a British conspiracy from the beginning; it ultimately succeeded because of 'the collective Muslim desire for power and seeming reluctance to live under those whom they had once governed'. The representation of Muslims and Hindus as two collective entities also echoes the master narrative we find in Pakistani textbooks.

Unity and Break-Up

After 1857, we have to move as far forward as 1916 to find another episode in the story of India's freedom struggle which represents the triumph of Hindu-Muslim unity. The year 1916 thus forms a pleasant mid-point in the narrative of freedom, marking the beginning of a short-lived process of communal harmony and joint endeavour to throw the British out. The brief chapter of communal harmony which opened in 1916 is also significant for the appearance of Mahatma Gandhi. The early 1920s present Gandhi at his glorious best, so to say, in the context of the task he had selected as the highest challenge of his life. Never before, and never again, was colonized India going to look so self-assured and relieved of internal tension as it did in the three years from 1919 to 1922.

Quick on the heels of the achievement of the Congress-League unity in 1916 and its impressive exercise in the

Khilafat campaign and the Non-cooperation Movement came the confusion and frustration of the post-Chauri Chaura years. Gandhi's decision to withdraw his first great initiative was, according to most historical accounts, a political error, an act of personal whimsy on the part of history's greatest idealist. In purely chronological terms, it marked the beginning of a period of political disarray and social turmoil. Developments in Turkey made Khilafat redundant, and this too made a significant contribution to the confusion and desperation in Muslim leadership, especially in the newly activated leadership of the ulema. As a parallel process, mobilization of the urban, newly risen middle class of northern India around symbols of Hindu revivalism made significant political strides. The devolution of democratic responsibilities and powers by the British under the auspices of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms heightened the urgency to win people over. Each step taken towards democratizing local spaces led to increasingly greater anxiety and tension in Hindu-Muslim relations.

The Indian school narrative of the period following the Lucknow Pact is marked by some of the most horrifying instances of British repression. First, we hear about Champaran, where Gandhi undertook his first experiment of non-violent satyagraha against the cruel practice of forced production of indigo. Then comes the mass shooting of Jallianwalla Bagh in April 1919. No other incident in the history of British colonial domination presents the same mixture of callous tyranny and victimization that the Jallianwallah massacre does. Another scene of repressive state violence in Punjab that belongs to this period is the Lahore demonstration against the Simon Commission. Lala Lajpat Rai was killed as a result of the injury he

received in this demonstration, and Saunders, who was responsible for the lathi charge, was killed later by Bhagat Singh and his associates. The Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements too witnessed state repression on a large scale, in retaliation against the organized resistance of the Raj by ordinary people and their leaders.

The periodization followed in most Pakistani textbooks runs from 1907 to 1927. By contrast, Indian textbooks generally select the year 1919 as a marker of historical time which shaped the course of the freedom struggle until the mid-1930s. This contrast in periodization is not difficult to explain. As the state textbook for Class VIII in UP explains, the period stretching from 1919 to 1947 is regarded as the 'Gandhi era' of the Indian nationalist struggle. The fourteen-year period falling between 1919 and 1935 forms the first phase of this era. The UP text says: 'in the Congress convention of 1919 Tilak announced: "Now Gandhi will show the nation's path and he will be our future leader." Thus, in 1919 the rein of the national movement came into Gandhi's hands. He transformed the nature of this movement.' This commentary is representative of a consensus in Indian school historiography. In a number of textbooks, the years following 1919 are structured around Gandhi's personality and activities. In Pakistani textbooks, on the other hand, the historical phase following the formation of the Muslim League in 1907 concludes in 1927 when Jinnah presented his 'fourteen points' in response to the Nehru Report. This period forms, according to Hussain's textbook, a phase of 'more hope and more disillusionment'. The period starting from 1927 is portrayed in Pakistani textbooks as the time when the idea of Pakistan crystallized.

This difference in periodization has obvious implications

for the shape of the larger narrative of the freedom struggle. It also has implications for the manner in which the teaching of history at school is expected to meet the objective of nation-building by training the young citizen's mind. From the Indian school historian's point of view, the arrival of Gandhi, with a great reputation earned in South Africa, marks the point at which the struggle for freedom went through a transformation. Ways to characterize the transformation may differ, but certain broad tendencies, which surfaced in the struggle from here onwards, have been identified in both professionally written histories and in school textbooks. One is the broadening of the national movement in terms of the participation of the peasantry and the urban working classes, as well as of different regions of the subcontinent. In other words, the freedom movement became more inclusive from here on.

The instrument by which Gandhi appears to have made it more inclusive gave the movement a moral character—a counterpoint to the moral influence that the British had perceived as their job to exercise as colonial masters of a backward people.¹ Gandhi's chosen instrument was non-violence, which he believed was best suited to pursue the truth underlying India's right to be free of British rule. It had an inward application too, with reference to India's social fabric which sanctioned the oppressive custom of untouchability. In view of this wide sweep of concerns that Gandhi's leadership enabled the freedom movement to embrace, his first major experiment with non-violent civil disobedience gives 1919 an obvious significance for the Indian school historian. The fact that this first experiment was said to have been hastily called off by Gandhi himself, and that the calling off led to grim consequences, do not detract from its significance as the

turning point of a story whose hero is now identified. Indeed, the decision to 'call off' the movement might show how much authority Gandhi wielded as a hero.

Since Gandhi's status as a hero does not apply in the case of Pakistani textbooks, we can hardly be surprised by the greatly reduced significance these books give to the year 1919. Pakistan's school history textbooks are no less herocentric than India's, but for the Pakistani school historian, Gandhi does not have the stature of a hero. A few textbooks present him as a major Congress leader, but the characterization is inevitably that of a 'Hindu leader'. Gandhi's biography, his arrival from South Africa and the main tenets of his philosophy of action, which most Indian textbooks discuss briefly at the beginning of the 1919-1935 period, find no place in Pakistani textbooks. Pakistani texts are mostly able to efface or at least greatly reduce the significance of Gandhi's entry into the politics of the subcontinent because these textbooks are constructed around a teleological notion of history.

The tendency to follow the arrow of time strictly in terms of the target which it eventually struck makes it impossible for textbook writers to notice the difficulties of comprehension and the prejudice that colours the historical narrative implicit in this technique. The fact that in 1919 the freedom of Pakistan depended as much on the issues on which India's freedom depended does not seem obvious to Pakistan's school historians. Their narrative appears to take cognizance of events and forces that ultimately led to freedom only to the extent that they facilitated the formation of Pakistan. Since 'freedom' is linked with the creation of Pakistan, the forces that worked for freedom at a time when Pakistan was not conceived are not given a high value. The long period from 1907 to 1927 marks a

spell of uncertainty and expectation for the Pakistani school historians, who claim to perceive this period from the perspective of the Muslims of India living during those decades. It is in the subsequent period that the uncertainty is said to diminish, with the discord over the Nehru Report and Jinnah's assertion of his fourteen points. It is in that phase that the Pakistani narrative finds a hero.

The differences in periodization notwithstanding, certain events figure in both sets of texts, though they are described from different perspectives and given different weightage. The Khilafat movement and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre are two such events. Both can be said to have shaped the course of events to come, though in rather different ways. Let us look at Khilafat first. For the Indian school historian, the Khilafat marks the high point of Hindu-Muslim unity and hence the triumph of secularism as a guiding value of the nationalist movement. The senior-level NCERT text calls the Khilafat Movement a 'new stream' in the national movement. The UP textbook for Class VIII says that Gandhi saw the insult inflicted on Muslims by the denigration of the Khalifa of Turkey as an insult to Hindus. Both the senior- and the middle-level UP texts list this wrong done to Muslims as one of the two reasons for Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement, the other one being the wrongs done in Punjab in the wake of the Rowlatt Act. The fact that Muslims took part in the Non-cooperation Movement on a big scale on account of the Khilafat issue gives it the status of a major and successful experiment in Gandhi's politics of values. The middle-level NCERT text which does not follow the usual periodization, and carries a much longer and more vivid account of the early 1920s than any other book, says that 'the movement on the Khilafat question soon merged with the movement against

the repression in Punjab and for Swaraj.’ Bipan Chandra’s NCERT text for Class VIII says that senior Congress leaders like Tilak and Gandhi saw the Khilafat agitation as a ‘golden opportunity for cementing Hindu-Muslim unity and bringing the Muslim masses into the national movement’. This text adds:

They realised that different sections of the people—Hindu, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, capitalists and workers, peasants and artisans, women and youth, and tribes and peoples of different regions—would come into the national movement through the experience of fighting for their own different demands and seeing that the alien regime stood in opposition to them.²

Khilafat in Pakistani Textbooks

This representation of the Khilafat Movement, and the manner in which it became part of the larger Non-cooperation Movement under Gandhi’s leadership, make for an interesting comparison with the Pakistani textbooks’ version of this period. Since most textbooks used for ‘Pakistan Studies’ are organized around specific events indicated by subtitles, they do not need to provide a clear narrative format which might necessitate linking of events as an attempt to explain how or why one event was followed by another. Moreover, several textbooks provide extremely brief and sketchy accounts of the period preceding the 1930s. Errors in the dating of events like the Lucknow Pact and the Khilafat Movement also abound. These have been listed and elaborately discussed by Aziz.³ For our present purpose, the interesting question is how the

confluence of Non-cooperation and Khilafat is explained. Most of the Pakistani textbooks present Khilafat in the foreground of events taking place at the turn of the decade. They also discuss the Hijrat Movement which the Indian textbooks ignore.

The Punjab state textbook for high school notes that the three movements—the Khilafat, the Hijrat and the Non-cooperation—‘are remarkable for the fact that the Muslims and Hindus worked jointly for their success’. The book says that this unity could not continue because ‘the hostile attitude of the Hindus towards the Muslims became evident.’ In the next sentence the text jumps to the publication of the Nehru Report in 1928, apparently as evidence of the charge made in the previous sentence. This text does not identify Gandhi as the leader of the Non-cooperation Movement. After mentioning the genesis of the Khilafat Movement, it says: ‘When the Khilafat movement was in full swing certain leaders advised the people not to cooperate with the English.’ The text then goes on to mention the salient steps taken under the auspices of the Non-cooperation Movement without once mentioning Gandhi.

A deeper understanding of the Pakistani view of the Khilafat Movement can be acquired from Bajwa’s text. Its treatment of the Khilafat tries to explain, as no other textbook in either country does, the dilemma of the Indian Muslims in psychological terms. ‘During the war,’ Bajwa says, ‘the Muslims in India could not openly declare their allegiance to another monarch, but could, and did, claim to follow a religious obligation to the Caliph.’ The precision of this logic is impressive enough to distract the reader quite summarily from the problem of wondering whether the Muslims of India were a single, unified voice. A couple of pages later this text summarizes the Khilafat experience

as being the first one to show to many Muslims that it was possible to 'mobilise the community for a cause'. In the discussion quoted earlier, however, the dilemma and the logic of Muslim thinking appear to arise out of a pre-existing solidarity. The text also mentions the difficulties that this supposed solidarity created for the British who needed Muslim troops for the war against the Ottoman empire. On account of the Muslim anxiety for the Caliphate, the text suggests, the British 'could not be sure of the dedication of these troops'.

More interesting is Bajwa's reference to Gandhi in the context of Khilafat and Non-cooperation. Bajwa is the only Pakistani school historian to introduce Gandhi by making a reference to his professional background as 'a British-trained barrister'. The text says that Gandhi was at this time an unofficial leader of the Congress party though he was its 'most influential figure'. Despite its overall liberal tone and discursive style, this text introduces children to the historical fact of Congress support for Khilafat by first saying: 'It is obvious that no Hindu could be seriously concerned with whether the Khilafat was to survive or not.' This remark proceeds, after undermining the political sincerity of the Congress in its support for Khilafat, to say that the Congress 'cleverly decided to use Muslim agitation to press the British for further concessions for self-rule and to show the Muslims that the Hindu-Muslim unity was beneficial'.⁴

The attribution of motives is not uncommon in history writing; here we see it used to reinforce the message that the Muslims of India were victims of manipulation. Gandhi is not spared in this logic of motive-attribution. While the Congress 'cleverly used' the Muslim agitation, Gandhi 'publicly declared his support for the Khilafat Movement

and also requested that Muslims should join the Congress in seeking the goal of Swaraj or self-rule'. Gandhi's support for Khilafat falls in sharp contrast, at the end of this paragraph-long discussion, with Jinnah's opposition to the demand for self-rule on the ground that it was premature at this stage. The text does not tell the students that Jinnah was opposed to Khilafat as well. This information is perhaps withheld to guard against the impression that Jinnah was not concerned about a cause that had stirred Muslim feelings so deeply. This is how Jinnah's image as a leader of Muslims is constructed, against the background of a period when Jinnah perceived himself as a secular leader, dedicated to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity.

In this narrative, followed with minor variations in most other Pakistani textbooks, the Khilafat Movement becomes the dominant story of 1919-22, overshadowing the Non-cooperation Movement or rather, subsuming it. At the time of the second Khilafat conference held at Amritsar in December 1919, Bajwa's text says, the Congress and the Muslim League also met in Amritsar and chose Gandhi as the leader of 'these three parties in their common objectives'. Hussain's textbook is more accurate when it says that only the Majlis-i-Khilafat and the Congress met in Amritsar and gave a united call to renounce British titles, and to boycott British-run institutions and goods. This text also notes that Jinnah and the Nawab of Mahmudabad objected to the 'unconstitutionality of this movement', and also that Jinnah resigned from the Congress in 1920.

It is hardly surprising that in the highly compressed version of events prepared for the relatively younger children of Class VIII in Punjab, the Non-cooperation Movement disappears altogether from the narrative of the period. This omission, seen against the cursory treatment

offered in the senior-level Pakistani texts, suggests that the Non-cooperation Movement does not quite fit in the national narrative of the birth of Pakistan. Khilafat, on the other hand, fits well, not only for the reason that it invokes a pan-Islamic scenario, but also because it presents the opportunity to represent Gandhi in a poor light. We have already seen how this is done in a relatively more liberal account given by Bajwa. In a flamboyant textbook like Rabbani and Sayyid's, Gandhi's decision to support the Khilafat becomes an example of his shrewdness as a politician as he 'had planned to use the Khilafat agitation' to pressure the government for independence. Rabbani and Sayyid go on to say: 'Whether the Muslims won or lost on the Khilafat issue was immaterial to Gandhi, what mattered was the purpose the movement could be made to serve.'

This text, criticized in Pakistan for its rabid enthusiasm, offers in this case merely a somewhat more wordy edition of a common version. Gandhi's shrewdness, his outward simplicity and humility, and his great appeal to the Hindus are components of the staple image he has in the Pakistani master narrative of the freedom struggle. This image is held together by the impression he made, of being both unreliable and whimsical when he suspended the Non-cooperation Movement after the incident at Chauri Chaura in 1922. Bajwa's text presents this episode as being of a decisive nature in shaping Muslim intentions to organize themselves instead of looking for allies. Interestingly, this text is misleading in using the term 'Swaraj movement' in place of 'non-cooperation movement'. 'Gandhi decided that the *Swaraj* movement was becoming too violent and *called off the attempt to remove the British*' (emphasis added). This gives the impression that Gandhi was no longer interested in Swaraj. Even if unintended, it is an important mistake,

for it clears the way for Jinnah to be presented here onwards as the greater leader of the freedom struggle. Gandhi's abrupt response to the Chauri Chaura incident and his subsequent arrest, which Hussain notes, 'was without undue commotion either from the populace at large, or from the Congress party', displace him from that centre of the saga of Pakistan's freedom into which his support for Khilafat had temporarily inserted him.

Gandhi in Indian Textbooks

In Pakistani textbooks there is no mention of Gandhi's personality, the values he upheld and promoted, and the inventive character of his politics. In most textbooks he is presented as just another Hindu politician. The Indian textbooks, which do pause for a paragraph to introduce Gandhi to children, also represent his personality and ideas in a sketchy manner. School historians seem to assume that for children to appreciate Gandhi's contribution to the politics of the freedom movement, a brief acquaintance with his emphasis on non-violence and truth may be quite sufficient. The following discussion of these values figures in the NCERT textbook for Class XII:

The ideal *Satyagrahi* was to be truthful and perfectly peaceful, but at the same time he would refuse to submit to what he considered wrong. He would accept suffering willingly in the course of struggle against the wrong-doer. The struggle was to be part of his love of truth. But even while resisting evil, he would love the evil-doer. Hatred would be alien to the nature of a true *Satyagrahi*. He would, moreover, be utterly fearless.⁵

The text goes on in this fashion, enumerating Gandhi's ideals and beliefs, such as his insistence on harmony between thought and action, and his faith in the power of common people. The subsection 'Gandhi and Ideals', where this introduction to Gandhi occurs, forms a short, independent essay which provides a handy preface to the Champaran satyagraha—Gandhi's first experiment in India after his South African training. The Class VIII NCERT text refers to the Champaran struggle after a short paragraph of a hundred words on Gandhi's birth, his work in South Africa and his main values. The paragraph concludes by saying that satyagraha is 'basically a non-violent method of fighting oppression'.

These two examples are representative of the manner in which Gandhi is introduced in Indian school history. There is no doubt that history textbooks make an exception in the case of Gandhi by pausing the flow of the historical narrative to mention biographical facts like the date and place of his birth, and his work in South Africa. Seen in the context of the NCERT policy on the history curriculum, Gandhi constitutes a unique case, for the policy emphasizes the discussion of 'forces, institutions and movements' in preference to 'biographical details of individual administrators and leaders'.⁶

The exception made for Gandhi is singular, for, we do not find a discussion of the philosophical or moral beliefs of any other personality, not even Tagore. The symbolic significance of the exceptional treatment given to Gandhi is obvious: it gives him a unique status. This being self-evident, we can ask the question whether the treatment given to Gandhi prepares children for comprehending and appreciating his role in the freedom struggle. The question is relevant because soon after the appearance of Gandhi on

the Indian political scene in 1915, all major events of a political nature require the young student to view them from Gandhi's perspective, in the context of his ideals and values. What Gandhi approves and what he rejects, the timing of a launch as well as its withdrawal or termination, are supposed to be of critical importance in the progress of the Indian master narrative of the freedom movement. Since he is represented as the hero of this story, his motivation, his philosophy and logic need to be understood as the basis for the appreciation of his actions.

It goes without saying that non-violence and truth, the two highest ideals which Gandhi upheld throughout his political career, are embedded in a complex structure of ideas that inspired him. It may be argued that thirteen- to seventeen-year-old readers cannot be expected to grasp these ideals more than nominally. Such an argument might suggest that non-violence has a somewhat better chance of being understood than truth, because the former has a more limited range of meaning. Similarly, it may be argued that terms like 'oppression' and 'resistance', 'suffering' and 'evil', which have been used in the NCERT text quoted earlier, can only be understood by children in an everyday sense, as opposed to a historical and political sense in which they relate to Gandhi's contribution to the Indian freedom movement. Faced with these arguments, we need to ask: is a nominal understanding of these ideals adequate for appreciating Gandhi's political leadership? More crucially, we should ask: do these ideals constitute the main elements of Gandhi's role in the history of the freedom movement? We can recognize three broad dimensions in this role: one, Gandhi as a mass leader who widened the social base of the Congress party; two, Gandhi as an imaginative strategist; and three, as a social reformer who widened the scope of politics itself.

Indian textbooks touch upon all these three dimensions of Gandhi's role in the history of the freedom movement, but they fail to establish a continuity across them. Most of the time, it is Gandhi's name and personality that the school historians invoke when they refer to one of these dimensions. At different points in the narrative the school historians remind the young reader that the course of future events was shaped by Gandhi's intention, his response and feelings. Certain events are described and explained entirely in terms of Gandhi's intentions. The young reader is simply never given a rational explanation of the choice Gandhi made or the factors—including his own concerns and the advice from others—that guided his judgement and action. He comes across as a charismatic figure whose ways were somewhat whimsical and unpredictable, though at times highly imaginative.

How Gandhi attained his status in the Congress and his moral authority among the masses remains a mystery and we can guess why this should be so. School textbooks do not ever discuss Gandhi's political philosophy which rejects the state as a point of reference for the citizen's ethical judgement. No Indian text mentions that Gandhi substituted the value of loyalty to the state's laws with a self-imposed structure of moral behaviour. He asked people to violate the law while staying accountable to the truth of their own conscience. This axiom of Gandhi's anarchism is either deliberately or inadvertently ignored. What we find instead is a piecemeal Gandhi who has a genius for mobilizing people, but whose choices remain inexplicable.

It is possible that a coherently portrayed Gandhi is not a priority of the Indian school historian. It is equally possible that a portrayal based on Gandhi's anarchism would be inconsistent with the stated educational aim of

training children for citizenship. A commonly held notion of this training makes it synonymous with loyalty to a centralist state. The fact that Gandhi was acting in the context of colonial rule does not appear quite sufficient as a safeguard against the possibility that the young readers of present-day school books might draw implications of Gandhi's philosophy and action in a decontextualized manner. Perhaps there is also an assumption that the school-going student is too young to understand political ideas and their expression in the life and work of an individual leader. There is no psychological ground to support this apprehension, but the possibility that it guides the school historian to present Gandhi as a great leader with fragmented, unconnected facets cannot be denied.

No event brings out a whimsical, obstinate and self-righteous image of Gandhi more sharply than his decision to call off the Non-cooperation Movement after the Chauri Chaura incident. Every textbook uses roughly the same words to explain what happened: the violence of Chauri Chaura disturbed Gandhi so much that he decided to withdraw the Non-cooperation Movement. Textbooks seem to have no room for an explanation or debate on Gandhi's motive or compulsions, nor do they discuss what kind of authority Gandhi wielded in the Congress party in this early phase of his political career in India. To gain a deeper understanding of the school historian's choices and limitations, let us take a brief look at other sources. The fact that the nationalist movement entered a lull after Gandhi's call for withdrawal in February 1922, and that his arrest the next month did not trigger a popular protest provide sufficient evidence to say that the India of 1922 was far from any major, historical turn. We can easily mistake Gandhi's leadership as being a revolutionary one

even though, as Sarkar says, 'he had given repeated and ample warning that he was prepared to lead only a specific type of controlled mass movement.'

Louis Fischer's account gives us a glimpse of Gandhi's perception of the Chauri Chaura incident:

The news of the atrocity reached Gandhi on 8 February, and it made him sick and sad. Violence upset him physically and psychologically. 'No provocation', he exclaimed, 'can possibly justify brutal murder of men who had been rendered defenceless and who had virtually thrown themselves to the mercy of the mob.'

It was a 'bad augury'.

'Suppose', he asked, 'the non-violent disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed and the Government had abdicated in favour of the victims of Bardoli, who would control the unruly elements that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation?' He was not sure that he could.⁸

Juxtaposed with the Bardoli resolution of the Congress Working Committee, Fischer's account enables us to appreciate the contradictory nature of the forces Gandhi was dealing with. R. Palme Dutt's analysis of the Bardoli resolution shows that the consequences of non-payment of land revenue and rent were as major a source of Gandhi's anxiety as the fear of manifest violence.⁹ This statement of Gandhi gives us a view of his mind that no textbook does. Such an insight and the possibility of a debate on the ethos of 1922 are apparently not considered necessary and relevant to the teaching of history at school. It is quite possible that

such a debate is regarded as being beyond the capacities of school-children or that school teachers are regarded as being incapable of engaging in such a debate. Textbook authors clearly prefer sweeping remarks to a nuanced debate. The Punjab textbook says, for example, that Gandhi 'ordered the non-cooperation movement to be stopped immediately!' The Tamil Nadu textbook for Class VIII says that 'in Kerala, 2000 peasants were arrested, when a mob burnt the police at Chauri Chaura'. In the case of this kind of confusion of geography and sequence, perhaps the text writers expect the teacher to step in to help and correct the factual and inferential mistakes children might make when examined. In another quick couple of sentences the book tells children what happened next: 'Gandhiji suspended the non-cooperation movement. He was arrested and sentenced to six years imprisonment.' The sentence seems to suggest that Gandhi was arrested for suspending the movement.

The use of brief, quiz-like answers to simple questions in recently published textbooks are indicative of the impact of television and the changes taking place in the examination system. Unlike the old pattern, the new approach expects children to give brief answers to objective questions. Sometimes, the answer required is just a word or a number. For instance, after reading the sentences quoted earlier, children might be asked: 'For how many years was Gandhiji imprisoned after the Non-cooperation Movement?'

Simultaneity of events and their geography appear to get no attention at all from the writers of most textbooks. They move freely across the map of India, juxtaposing incidents happening in different places in one sweeping sentence after another. The Gujarat state textbook, for instance, gives us the following description of what

happened in February 1922: 'To start the no-tax movement in Bardoli district, Gandhiji himself went to Bardoli. Before the collective non-violence movement began, the police fired at a procession in Chauri Chaura, a village near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.' Then, after a brief description of what happened in Chauri Chaura, the text says: 'Under the direction of Gandhiji the Congress Working Committee postponed the struggle and continued their constructive programmes.' Between the withdrawal of the struggle and the continuation of the constructive programme, the young reader is allowed no breather to take in the momentous nature of the first decision. The text moves on in its flat, all-embracing style: 'So, the people were disappointed. Certain national leaders criticised the decision of postponing the struggle.'¹⁰

Apart from being pedagogically unsound and crude, the summary attribution of Gandhi's snap decision to call off the Non-cooperation Movement to his commitment to non-violence is historically untrue as well. His patience with the ulema, who dominated the Khilafat, was running out. Mushirul Hasan says that by the end of 1921, Gandhi could have been under no illusion about the much-publicized unity between Muslim leaders of the Khilafat and some of the Hindu politicians of the Congress.¹¹ He did not attend the Karachi Khilafat Conference held in July 1921, apparently because he anticipated unacceptably flamboyant pronouncements to be made. On the other hand, Gandhi was deeply disturbed by the Moplah killings in September and by the violence that broke out during the protest against the arrival of the Prince of Wales at Bombay in November that year. It needs little imagination to appreciate why no Indian school textbook mentions the Moplah riots, and why every Pakistani textbook does. The mention

of the Moplah violence would seem to spoil the web of Hindu-Muslim unity that Indian textbooks weave against the background of Gandhi's first experiment of satyagraha.

Textbooks make Gandhi's response to the Chauri Chaura incident look far more sudden than it really was by exaggerating the success of Non-cooperation and Khilafat. In his political biography of Gandhi, Nanda recalls that after the Bombay violence that took place on the arrival of the Prince of Wales, Gandhi had said that the non-violence of the non-cooperators had been worse than the violence of the cooperators.¹² Gandhi said: 'The Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils.' Gandhi's awareness of what Mushirul Hasan calls 'the patchy success' of the movement, combined with his discomfort with the postures the ulema had taken in the context of Khilafat, apparently led him to see Chauri Chaura as an opportunity to backtrack. Hasan says: 'The old postures seemed irrelevant, and the suspension of civil disobedience suddenly became a political necessity.'¹³ The impression that school textbooks give to the young reader is a far cry from this. They suggest that Gandhi's first act of national leadership had been a stunning success, and that like a truly great hero he had displayed his commitment to an ideal, in preference to taking full political advantage of his success, when he suspended the movement.

Several pedagogical and psychological dimensions of historiography for children are relevant to this discussion. The necessity of avoiding jarring details of an episode can arise both out of the need to keep the narration simple so that children can grasp it, and from the desire to reinforce its desired moral appeal. One suspects that the latter applies to the portrayal of the 1919-22 events in Indian textbooks. We see in the neat portrayal of this period the

same ideological instinct at work that we saw in the context of the 1857 rebellion. The instinct is to present secularism as an innate value of the Indian nationalist movement. This instinct enables the school historian to keep communal ideas and activities separate from the main narrative of the freedom struggle. Ultimately, the instinct allows the text writers to show the demand for Pakistan as a sudden and ahistorical development, an act of manoeuvre on the part of Jinnah and the British. The approach logically leads to the use of history teaching at school for the political aim of discrediting Pakistan. Its legitimacy as a product of the freedom struggle stands circumscribed due to the textbook writers' manoeuvre in constructing and packaging all major episodes since 1857 in a wrapper of secular nationalism. The children who study these textbooks are prevented from realizing that the freedom struggle constituted a pervasive contest among rival value-positions.¹⁴

In this matter the children of India and Pakistan have something in common, although the specific politics of values they confront unawares is quite different in the two countries. If good pedagogy is supposed to make children think for themselves, the textbooks of both countries make the practice of such a pedagogy difficult, though in different ways. In Pakistan, the policy of 'Islamization' implies a general discouragement of individual questioning of state ideology. In India, the state's commitment to rationality and secularism—as opposed to the politics of identity-building—gives the impression that independent thinking will be encouraged. School textbooks obstruct this possibility by presenting ideologically tailored content. Even if the ideology upheld by the designers of this content is that of secular rationality, the content itself cannot encourage rational inquiry because it does not let

children see the different dimensions of a historical happening. Gandhi's representation in the context of the early 1920s offers an example of this problem. Gandhi is denied all honour and stature in the portrayal of Khilafat and Non-cooperation in all Pakistani textbooks. In India, he is cleverly portrayed to ensure that the politician in him is left out: only the Mahatma remains. As captive audiences, children of neither country are allowed the opportunity to appreciate the enormous challenge he faced in bringing Hindus and Muslims closer together.

The Difficult Years

The years following the end of Non-cooperation and Khilafat present a new kind of challenge to the textbook narrators of the story of freedom. The challenge arises from the allegorical character of the narrative already established. As a genre, the Indian narrative of freedom now arouses the expectation that the thrill of a mass, moral upsurge will continue, reinforcing the impression that rational secularism was invincible. At the same time, the narrators must also act as chroniclers, which means that they must account for the passage of time between one dramatic event and the next.

The mid-1920s constitute precisely one such interlude between dramatic events. In the period preceding the arrival of the Simon Commission in 1927, Indian textbooks find nothing to dwell on in their favoured mode of reporting dramatic events centred on morally-inspired defiance and the spirit of sacrifice. The fact is that the mid-1920s present the textbook writers with a substance so radically different from such favoured material that many of them simply ignore this period altogether while others mention it as briefly as possible. We are referring to the

unprecedented scale and intensity of communal riots that took place between 1923 and 1927. The most serious riots in UP took place in Agra, Shahjahanpur, and Saharanpur in 1923, in Allahabad and Lucknow in 1926, and in Bareilly, Kanpur, and Dehradun in 1927. Communal violence also occurred in Punjab, Bengal, and in certain places in southern and western India in these years. The most immediate causes which are said to have triggered these riots were cow slaughter and music in front of mosques.¹⁵

These riots are ignored in the majority of Indian textbooks; in the ones which mention them, the riots are not discussed with any major significance attached to them. For instance, the NCERT Class VIII text makes a passing reference to the riots in the opening lines of the chapter that covers the nationalist movement from 1923 to 1939: 'For some years after the withdrawal of the Non-cooperation movement there was no nation-wide struggle. For sometime, there was a widespread feeling of disappointment and frustration in the country. There were communal riots and the Hindu-Muslim unity—achieved before and during the Non-cooperation struggle—seemed to be weakening.' Within the next two statements, however, the narrative retrieves its uplifting tone, 'The struggle for freedom had apparently suffered a setback. These years, however, were also years of preparation for a more powerful struggle.'¹⁶ From here onwards the text focuses on the activities of the Swaraj party, which was formed in 1923, and the social reconstruction programme of the Congress which included the promotion of khadi and opposition to untouchability. This choice of focus permits Dev and Dev, the writers of this text, to ignore the divisive consequences that the working of democracy, especially the provision for separate

electorates, had in the functioning of local-level institutions of democracy. The focus also enables the narrative to ignore the significant role that religious revivalism played among both Hindus and Muslims in encouraging separatist tendencies.

The senior-level NCERT textbook by Bipan Chandra gets amazingly convoluted while interpreting the events that followed the formal withdrawal of Non-cooperation and the end of Khilafat on account of developments in Turkey. First, on Khilafat, the textbook says that 'some historians' who criticize the Congress involvement in Khilafat are right 'to an extent', yet, 'there was, of course, nothing wrong in the nationalist movement taking up a demand that affected Muslims only'. It was expected, the writer says, that 'different sections of society would come to understand the need for freedom through their particular demands'. Here it is obvious that religious identity is acceptable to the writer as the marker of a 'section' of society. In the main argument running through the book, it is not. Indeed, the book spares no opportunity to explain that religion is not as important as economic interests in shaping the course of history.

In the context of Khilafat, the argument proceeds to distinguish two levels. The nationalist leadership failed, the student is told, 'to some extent in raising the religious political consciousness of the Muslims to the higher plane of secular political consciousness'. At the same time, the student is reminded that the Khilafat demand was 'an aspect of the general spread of the anti-imperialist feelings among the Muslims'. As proof of this point, the book offers the argument that 'after all there was no protest in India when Kamal Pasha abolished the Caliphate in 1924'. This argument seems to suggest that the Muslims of India

appreciated the eventual abolition of the Caliphate because it was brought about by Turkey's own leadership, not by an imperialist agency. This attribution of recognition of Turkey's modernist turn is contradicted by a statement made on the same page a little earlier where the text says that the modernist steps taken by Kamal Pasha 'broke the back of the Khilafat agitation'.¹⁷

The awkward movement of the narrative continues when this text mentions the outbreak of communal riots following the termination of Non-cooperation. People felt frustrated, it says, and 'communalism raised its ugly head'. Both the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha took advantage of the situation and the feeling that 'all people were Indians first received a setback'. A general political apathy spread, and Gandhi took temporary retirement. Despite the situation getting 'dark', the reader is reassured that 'behind the scenes, forces of national upsurge had been growing' as the response to the visit of Simon Commission showed.

A new chapter began in the freedom movement, we are told, and a new chapter begins in Chandra's textbook too. In the new chapter, we notice that the record of 'nationalist' activities gets spatially separated from the record of 'communist' activities. The last point at which the two figure together comes when the Nehru Report was under preparation. Briefly explaining its failure to obtain consensus, Chandra says: 'It should also be noted here that there existed a basic difference between the politics of the nationalists and the politics of the communists.' The difference was that the former fought with the government on behalf of all Indians; the latter sought favours from the government for their own communities. After this point, this textbook makes no attempt to weave the discussion of

communal forces into the larger narrative of the freedom struggle. Twelve pages later, 'the rise of communalism' figures as a separate subsection, discussing it as the 'fifth important development' of the late 1930s. Long before the Partition of India occurs, a partition of the two narratives occurs in the text. Far from preparing the student to make sense of the speedy developments of the 1940s and the eventual break-up of the subcontinent, this jettisoning of the narrative of communalism from the main story of the freedom struggle incapacitates the student from making any sense of why things happened the way they did.

We can better appreciate the pedagogic problems this text presents by recalling the issues raised in Chapter II concerning children's intellectual development and their comprehension of history. Young students of history, even at the age of seventeen, may find it especially difficult to understand an episode which features the intermingling of events. Their ability to see a moment of the past from the different perspectives of the actors involved in it is constrained further if noteworthy events have occurred simultaneously in different regions. The early 1920s are one such moment in the history of the freedom struggle. From Punjab to the Malabar coast and the plains of UP, very different kinds of developments are noticed. As a factor of analysis and understanding, geography can be of great help here. Generally speaking, geography has the potential to make the study of the past more interesting for children. The least that textbook authors can do to take advantage of geography as a resource for history teaching is to provide a map, locating different areas where events took place. This modest facility is overlooked in all Indian textbooks of modern history.

The early 1920s appear as a mass of details, sometimes

interlocked and at other times discordant, with no clues that might help the student to sort them out. The dominant personality of the newly arrived Gandhi does not help much either, for he is presented with highly selective strokes as we have seen earlier, restraining the student from forming a holistic idea of the man. A handful of biographical details about him can hardly be of much use in this respect. One wonders why, not just geography, but biography too is used so reluctantly by Indian text writers. Is it a constraint of space that the Indian system of education imposes on every text writer or is it a policy decision to keep history focused on social forces rather than personalities? Most likely, both reasons are applicable in the case of the two NCERT textbooks we have just discussed.

Let us now turn our attention to the portrayal of the mid-1920s in Pakistani textbooks. It is interesting that they too largely ignore the communal tension and the riots that took place in this period. The only major exception is J. Hussain's illustrated history which attempts to identify the different approaches used by historians for explaining why the 1920s witnessed an exacerbation of communal conflict throughout the subcontinent. Most other Pakistani textbooks find no room for discussing the steep decline of communal harmony that followed the bonhomie witnessed at the start of the decade. It is not difficult for us to speculate on why Pakistani texts are so similar to their Indian counterparts in this matter. As we shall see in subsequent episodes too, and most glaringly in the context of Partition, both Indian and Pakistani textbooks avoid giving details of communal violence, including basic facts like the places where violence erupted and the number of people killed and injured.

On the face of it, one may say that the writers of school textbooks do not consider communal violence an appropriate topic for young students. An obvious justification for such a policy is a generalized one, namely that unpleasant truths like the killing of people belonging to one religious community by members of another may leave a harmful or wrong impression on young minds, i.e. encourage them to condone such acts. The argument is so simple and artless, and thereby so similar to the popular stereotype of children's nature, that we do not question it, just as we do not question the practice of banning any discussion of contemporary violence at school, including violence that children may have personally witnessed.¹⁸ The psychological appeal of such an argument is, in fact, based on the denial of children's psychological need to make sense of, and come to terms with, mass frenzy when they have witnessed it. The knowledge that mass violence has erupted a number of times in the history of Hindu-Muslim relations is available to children through the media, including cinema and television, as well as in family lore in both India and Pakistan. The reason why textbook writers pretend that it may be best to protect children from such knowledge at school perhaps lies in the nature of the nation-building role which schools and history textbooks are supposed to perform.

The role demands an assiduous filtering out of the record of communal violence from the narrative of the national movement to whatever extent possible. This imperative applies to Pakistan as much as it does to India, though in the Indian case a clear distinction is made between nationalism and communalism, and the two are portrayed as being contradictory forces, whereas in Pakistan the two ideas are conflated. The consolidation of collective

self-identity in communities was a common aspect of nationalist consciousness and the struggle for freedom.¹⁹ Even though communalism as a political force is rightly portrayed as being hostile to nationalism, the narrative of nationalism can hardly be disentangled from the record of communal consciousness. Writers of school textbooks carefully guard the parameters within which communalism acquired a negative image. Precise details of communal violence or any substantial discussion of its causes would necessarily transgress these parameters. Text writers find it best to avoid the mention of communal conflict to the extent possible; where it cannot be avoided, as in the case of the violence associated with Partition, they acknowledge it in the fewest possible words as we shall see later.

Moving beyond this similarity between the textbooks of the two countries in their portrayal of the mid-1920s, we can now approach a key feature of the Pakistani books. They gloss over the differences within the Congress, and insist on portraying it as a single cohesive body with well-defined goals. Pakistani textbooks do not even mention the Hindu Mahasabha as being an important player in the politics of the 1920s, let alone being a major influence within the Congress. That the Hindu Mahasabha exercised a deep psychological influence on developments in the Congress, especially in the context of the Nehru Committee's Report, cannot be guessed by a lay reader of Indian histories of the freedom struggle, but the Pakistani accounts also make a definite attempt to ignore this influence. The reason is not difficult to guess, given the larger orbit of meaning they construct for their young readers. They ignore the influence of the Hindu Mahasabha on the Congress because it enables them to target the Congress more purposefully by calling it an organization

of Hindus and by alleging that it was committed to establishing a Hindu Raj in India. Such an approach permits Pakistani text writers to make leaders like Gandhi and Nehru indistinct from Malaviya and Moonje.

Nehru Report

The report prepared by the committee set up by the All Parties Conference in February 1928 and chaired by Motilal Nehru stands erased from the record of the freedom movement in most of the school textbooks used in India. The few which mention it treat its preparation as a minor event in history, deserving only a passing mention. There is just one exception which I will discuss a little later. The case of Pakistani textbooks is a complete contrast. The Nehru Report has a key place in the record of the national memory they present. That may be one reason why they use a broad brush to paint the Congress at the time the Nehru Report was written and discussed. Pakistani school historians falsify known facts by suggesting that the Nehru Report was an expression of the Hindu mind or that it was 'based on anti-Muslim and anti-Islam sentiments' (Rabbani and Sayyid). This may be an extreme example, but it has elements that are common to other textbooks.

A representative version of this important episode of Pakistan's national history can be found in the Class VIII Punjab state textbook. The choice of details made for inclusion in this thirteen-page story of freedom can be seen as significant in that it indicates the ideological and pedagogic mapping of Pakistan's national memory. This highly compressed narrative states clearly what the occasion for the Nehru Report was, then mentions the 'Muslim response' to it, and moves on to list the fourteen points presented by Jinnah.

Before we look at this text's commentary on the Nehru Report, let us recognize that we are examining an episode on which the Indian and Pakistani school textbooks exhibit total divergence. In the portrayal of earlier episodes we noticed differences of approach and perspective; in this case, we find total disagreement. What is significant for the Pakistani school historian has little importance for his Indian counterpart. Not a single middle-level Indian textbook mentions the Nehru Report. After the visit of the Simon Commission, the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 forms the next stopover, as it were. Both events resonate the generic character of the Indian freedom struggle as an adventure tale. Indian text writers view the Nehru Report as a political event lacking this character, and therefore they erase it entirely from the junior-level texts. For the older readers of Class X and XII, it is mentioned briefly as a minor occurrence which did not influence the main course of the Indian freedom struggle. And that is precisely what it did if we see it from the Pakistani school historian's perspective.

We may disagree with the representation of the Nehru Report in Pakistani textbooks, but we can hardly disagree with the point that the ideological differences it brought to the fore made a fundamental difference to the Indian freedom struggle and, in that sense, it constituted a chronological watershed. In his study of Muslim nationalism, Mushirul Hasan calls the Nehru Report 'the last straw for the Congress-Muslim relationship'. He says: 'After 1928, many Muslims who had earlier joined Congress became increasingly hostile to its activities. This was particularly evident during the civil disobedience movement. In marked contrast to the non-cooperation days, Muslims participated in very small numbers in civil disobedience.'²⁰

This picture contrasts quite sharply with the one that Indian school textbooks portray. Most Indian textbooks claim that all sections of Indian society actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement. It makes sense why Indian texts uniformly stick to this dubious claim. The narrative of the Indian freedom struggle *structurally* excludes all but the pro-Congress Muslims from 1928 onwards. That is why the meagre participation of Muslims in the Civil Disobedience Movement is glossed over in the Indian record of national memories. This tacit policy of attaching no significance to organized Muslim response is what we see in the discussions of the Nehru Report in all senior secondary level textbooks.

Among Indian texts, the only one that gives a somewhat detailed account of the Nehru Report is Perin Bagli's text for Class X. It explains the occasion of the Report, mentions the names of its members, and gives details of its recommendations for the Indian Constitution and the Parliament. However, concerning the Muslim leaders' response to the Report, all that this book has to say is: 'Mr Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League, moved a number of amendments to those portions of the Report which dealt with communal matters, but finally the Report was approved.' Clearly, this text attaches no significance to the amendments demanded by Jinnah. Moreover, from the perspective of this text, it would seem as if all the issues raised by him were 'communal matters', lacking national significance.

The sharp bifurcation of the 'communal' and 'national' is a structural feature of the Indian narrative of freedom. Its conceptual validity apart, its role in enabling school historians to project their own perspective into the study of the past is quite remarkable. It is historically true that several liberal Congressmen did not regard Jinnah's demands

as being purely communal. Indeed, the need to take the Muslim leadership along was a policy of the Congress, and for this purpose the Congress was not institutionally against the consideration and fulfilment of the demands which pertained to the specific interests of Muslims. To regard such demands as purely communal, and to hold such 'communal' demands in sharp opposition to national demands is to think ahistorically. If textbook writers cared to look back, they might recall that in the context of Khilafat, which had occurred not so long ago, they had readily treated a concern specific to the Muslims as national. How did Muslim concerns become purely communal in less than a decade? The use of context-specific interpretive strategies arises out of an ideological anxiety to socialize the young reader, and it necessarily discourages the development of historical thinking.

The Indian text writer's practice of sharply dividing the 'communal' and the 'national' in an anachronistic manner has a corollary in the Pakistani text writer's construction of monolithic 'Muslim' and 'Hindu' perspectives. No Pakistani textbook lets the young reader know that the Congress was a party with people from a large range of social backgrounds and ideological positions. Pakistani textbook writers talk about Hindu politicians as if they all had the same viewpoint. These writers completely forget that Jinnah had many sympathizers and admirers in the Congress who tried hard to incorporate his main demands in the Nehru Report.²¹ Apparently, such an acknowledgement would go against the grain of the master narrative of Pakistan's freedom and birth. The ideological character of this narrative demands the backdating of the separatist urge in Muslim politics. It also impels the text writers to exclude all those Muslim and Hindu leaders who

consistently rejected the pressure the Congress was under all the time to use the nationalist movement as an opportunity to fulfil specifically Muslim or Hindu expectations. Moreover, no Pakistani textbook tells its readers that there was a considerable regional variation in the Muslim response to the Nehru Report. When a primary-level Punjab state textbook says, 'Muslims were completely disappointed with the Report', it is not using the language of history. This kind of language is pedagogically meaningless too, for there is nothing a child or a primary-level teacher can do to ascertain the meaning of terms like 'Muslims' and their 'complete' disappointment. Yet, we must concede that pedagogic barrenness has great potential as a source of political and ideological indoctrination.

Contrary Imaginations

From 1930 onwards, for the remaining seventeen years of the story of freedom, the divergence between the two master narratives rapidly increases. Common points of reference become increasingly scarce in the midst of mutually exclusive bodies of detail. The established character and structure of the two stories gain sharpness. More remarkably, we come across an interchange, in terms of the speed at which historical time is covered by words or text space. Up to the period of the late 1920s, Indian textbooks cover the time-span between two events relatively more 'slowly' in the sense that they dwell on specific events and fill the time-gap between events with some explanation. Pakistani texts, on the contrary, appear to be moving 'fast': they barely mention certain major events, and at times cover several years of historical time in half a sentence. In respect of this speed of coverage, the two sets

of textbooks interchange their character as they enter the 1930s, and especially when they get into the late 1930s. From then onwards, Indian textbooks become unusually 'fast', and Pakistani textbooks become remarkably 'slow'.

Why the coverage of the last decade and a half of the freedom struggle should heighten the difference between the two sets of school texts is not difficult to explain; the interchange of the pace of time-coverage is. Let us first look at the sharpening of divergence between the Indian and Pakistani textbooks, remembering though, that despite the divergence, the two stories never become mirror images of each other. The difference between the Indian and the Pakistani master narratives of freedom from British rule is essentially in the choice of events they mention. Certain details are highlighted in one story; in the other, they are mentioned without emphasis or they are ignored altogether; and vice versa. This tendency increases in the coverage of the events that took place in the last seventeen years of the struggle. The tendency becomes so strong that at times we wonder if we are reading about the same past in the two historical accounts. In the context of nation-building, which is relevant both to Indian and Pakistani textbooks, we can say that the politics of mention becomes more compelling as the stories come closer to the ending. As we discussed in Chapter V, the ending is not identical if we see it from the perspective of the nation-building agendas of the two systems of education. Attainment of freedom is common to both stories, but the Indian story must explain *why* India was divided, while the Pakistani story must explain *how* the division was made to happen. This crucial difference between the orientations of the two narratives forces their last sections to construct the relevant bodies of facts increasingly differently.

The two orientations symbolize the nationalist urge that the two nation-states want to nurture with the help of education. The memory of the nationalist struggle needs firmer shaping in the last episodes compared to the earlier ones. True, in certain Pakistani texts, the shadow of the ending extends to earlier episodes too; indeed, as we have seen, certain Pakistani authors do not mind going as far back as the nineteenth century in their search for the seeds of the idea of Pakistan. Still others detect the birth of Pakistan in the birth of Islam. Ayesha Jalal traces these 'priceless examples' of the official discourse to 'tensions between the ideology of Muslim nationalism and the geographic limitations of the Pakistani nation-state'.¹

Ignoring the boldly imaginative authors Jalal is concerned with, we can fruitfully focus on the relatively sober Pakistani writers who establish a certain irreversibility in historical developments at a time when Jinnah failed to win sufficient support for his demand for modifications in the Nehru Report. Inasmuch as the master narrative of the Pakistan Movement identifies with Jinnah, it treats 1928 as the year when a 'parting of ways' occurred. Beyond this point, the Pakistani school historian sees no need to report on developments which did not directly strengthen the separatist nationalism of Jinnah. A general idea and the premonitional naming of Pakistan occurred soon after this point, so the Pakistani account finds adequate reasons to underemphasize or altogether ignore even major events that took place from here onwards. The fact that these incidents had a crucial role to play in the pursuit of India's claim to freedom does not seem to matter. To use Anderson's phrase, once the 'imagined community' has been imagined and named, all that matters for its chronicler is to tell how that dream was realized.²

The Indian nationalist memory has quite a different task at hand while dealing with the 1930s and beyond. The gist of that task is to celebrate the struggle and the eventual triumph of secular inspiration, despite the gnawing awareness that its triumph was marred and vitiated by religious separatism and Partition. A close identification with secular nationalism compels the school historian to marginalize the story of the political struggle of religious separatists from the early 1930s onwards. The master narrative of the Indian freedom movement projects the bitter awareness of Partition onto the political happenings of the late 1930s, and lets that awareness of the eventual outcome influence the selection of facts to be used in recording the last ten years of the nationalist movement. The Indian school historian, thus, constructs a past in which religious separatism was not in a position to shape the course of history, when, in fact, the historian is aware that separatism was rapidly gaining ground. Celebrating India's birth as a pluralist, modern nation perhaps demands such a construction. As a national narrator, it is the school historian's responsibility to train the young to treat 'nationalism' and 'communalism' as antonyms.

Fulfilment of this responsibility requires that the narrative of freedom should exclude the detailed record of 'communal' gains. Unfortunately, the imperative to exclude this record implies an increasingly stringent selection of events from the late 1930s and thereon. Not only does 'communal' politics, fuelled by the demand for Pakistan, advance and expand rapidly in the 1940s, its status as an adversary to secular nationalism also grows during the World War II years. As it happened, the structure of the colonial reality imposed an annoying pressure on the 'nationalist' to negotiate with the 'communal' adversary.

Indian school historians find this triangular destiny of the final phase of the freedom struggle somewhat incompatible with their decision to focus squarely on the 'nationalist' struggle, come what may. No wonder they find it necessary to hurry through the maze of events that occurred in the final years and months. Nearly all Indian textbooks get noticeably more compressed in style and more selective in detail when they deal with the last decade of the freedom movement. In several textbooks, this decade takes barely three or four pages to cover.

The opposite happens in Pakistani texts. Having raced through the earlier decades of 'hopes and disillusionment', 'more hopes and more disillusionment', as J. Hussain characterizes them, school historians finally find a decade in which details become worth discussing. The late 1930s figure in every Pakistani textbook as a time to sit down and look around, taking note of happenings as well as tendencies. And then, once the 1940s start, *every* date worth mentioning attracts interpretation, not just recording. What gets a line in an Indian text gets a page or more in Pakistani texts at this point, before the two regain a similarity in delineating the final moment of mid-August 1947, as we shall see in the next chapter. The late 1930s and the 1940s give the Pakistani school historian the opportunity to slow down and splurge, not merely in terms of giving detail, but also in terms of explaining.

The Early 1930s

In Indian textbooks, the decade opens with an elaborate account of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The NCERT text by Bipan Chandra presents the launching of Civil Disobedience as a response to the new 'mood' reflected in

the boycott of the Simon Commission and the rise of radical forces. Other textbooks construct no such scenario, and present Civil Disobedience as a decision. However, the mode of its start is represented in just about every text by referring to Gandhi's Dandi March. The young reader is given little chance to appreciate why or how Gandhi might have hit upon the idea of choosing common salt as a means to express wilful disobedience to an alien, unjust rule. The elapse of two months between the Lahore session of the Congress and Gandhi's disclosure of a programme for a struggle based on Civil Disobedience goes unreported. Once again, we see Gandhi as a man who could conjure up miracles instantaneously. His choice of salt as a symbol appears as a matter of consensus among his colleagues, which it was not. And then, precisely what he did to *make* salt remains vague. The closest any text comes to describing what he might have done is Bipan Chandra's book which says that Gandhi 'picked up a handful of salt and broke the salt law'. The Gujarat text for Class VIII says Gandhi broke the salt law by 'taking a pinch of salt'. The NCERT textbook for the same level explains that the salt Gandhi picked up had been 'formed by the evaporation of sea water'. Other texts remain oblivious to the need to explicate or visualize the act, and some, like the Tamil Nadu textbook for Class VIII, ignore it altogether.

Precisely what did Gandhi do? To appreciate how little the writers of school texts care for their young readers' curiosity and sensibility, we can go to Louis Fischer's description of the event. It shows how major an opportunity this episode provides for history being brought to life if only the chronicler would care to do so. Fischer's portrayal of the Dandi March brings out the ethos of Gandhi's leadership as we can see from the following excerpt:

On 12 March, prayers having been sung, Gandhi and seventy-eight male and female members of the ashram, whose identities were published in *Young India* for the benefit of the police, left Sabarmati for Dandi, due south of Ahmedabad. Gandhi leaned on a lacquered bamboo staff one inch thick and fifty-four inches long with an iron tip. Following winding dirt roads from village to village, he and his seventy-eight disciples walked two hundred miles in twenty-four days. 'We are marching in the name of God,' Gandhi said . . .

He had no trouble in walking. 'Less than twelve miles a day in two stages with not much luggage,' he said. 'Child's play!' Several became fatigued and footsore, and had to ride in a bullock cart. A horse was available for Gandhi throughout the march but he never used it. 'The modern generation is delicate, weak, and much pampered,' Gandhi commented. He was sixty-one. He spun every day for an hour and kept a diary and required each ashramite to do likewise.

In the area traversed, over three hundred village headmen gave up their government posts. The inhabitants of a village would accompany Gandhi to the next village. Young men and women attached themselves to the marching column; when Gandhi reached the sea at Dandi on 5 April, his small ashram band had grown into a non-violent army several thousand strong.

The entire night of 5 April, the ashramites prayed, and early in the morning they accompanied Gandhi to the sea. He dipped into the water, returned to

the beach, and there picked up some salt left by the waves. Mrs Sarojini Naidu, standing by his side, cried, 'Hail, Deliverer.' Gandhi had broken the British law which made it a punishable crime to possess salt not obtained from the British government salt monopoly. Gandhi, who had not used salt for six years, called it a 'nefarious monopoly'.³

Textbooks not only fail to convey this kind of vivid impression of Gandhi's innovative campaign and the ethos of Civil Disobedience, they also gloss over the political challenge he had hoped to meet by launching this campaign. Why the Irwin offer to progress towards Dominion Status was bypassed, and why Gandhi preferred Jawaharlal Nehru as Congress president despite opposition are among the many questions that make the turn of the decade a politically interesting point in history. If Percival Spear⁴ is right in guessing that Gandhi was anxious to avoid a left-right split in the Congress, his manoeuvring capacity deserves to be brought to the notice of school-children—if only because it makes Gandhi more appreciable as a political leader. As on the previous occasion of Non-cooperation, this time too, the bulk of Indian textbooks prefer to portray Gandhi as a superhuman arbiter of India's destiny. Many text writers describe the launch of the Civil Disobedience bluntly as Gandhi's 'order'. The passage of time since the early 1920s seems to make little difference to anything. Gandhi remains a frozen figure of greatness, and so does his favourite strategy. With the exception of Bipan Chandra's textbook, no other book explains how Civil Disobedience was an advance on Non-cooperation. More significantly, without exception, Indian textbooks suppress the historical fact

that unlike Non-cooperation and Khilafat, Civil Disobedience did not attract much Muslim participation.

The breakdown that occurred over the Nehru Report apparently loses all significance for Indian school historians when they talk about the rise of radical movements and the starting of Civil Disobedience. More ominously, they turn a blind eye to the sharpening of the Hindu-Muslim division in both political and cultural spheres. It was in 1932 that the children of United Provinces stopped reading a shared primer. For the first time, separate primers were demanded and introduced for Hindi and Urdu in vernacular primary schools.⁵ Of course, one does not expect such details to find a place in history textbooks, but the acknowledgement of a growing communal divide exemplified by episodes like this, would certainly protect students from the epistemic shock they get on hearing about the vehement demand for Partition made in the 1940s. They would be better equipped to understand later events if they knew about the Muslim League's refusal to take part in Civil Disobedience and Iqbal's suggestion in 1930 for a Muslim state within the Indian federation.

Before we move over to see how Pakistani textbooks portray the early 1930s, let us also look at the coverage given in Indian textbooks to the Round Table Conferences. The Class XII NCERT textbook by Bipan Chandra maintains a silence on who attended the First and the Third Round Table Conferences. About the absence of the Congress at the First Round Table Conference, this text says that it was like 'staging Ramlila without Rama'. The Third Conference finds no mention at all; nor do the Communal Award and the Poona Pact between Gandhi and Ambedkar. Already, we can see this otherwise slow-moving, densely written text gaining speed, bypassing

major events. True, every historian selects the facts he considers worthy of mention; what we notice at this point in this textbook is a definite increase in the rate of selection. Most other textbooks display the same change, focusing on the Second Round Table Conference because Gandhi attended it, then moving on to the Government of India Act of 1935. Quite a few texts move straight to the Quit India Movement, leaping over a decade of developments. Perin Bagli's book for ICSE schools is perhaps the only text that gives students some idea regarding the participants of the First Round Table Conference and the proceedings of the Third. It also provides a box on Ambedkar's life and mentions that the Poona Pact 'nearly doubled the number of seats reserved for the Depressed Classes, to be filled by them alone'. The NCERT Class VIII text has a special section on movements of the Depressed Classes, but even here we find no mention of the Poona Pact. Looking at this general tendency, one wonders why the Poona Pact fails to qualify for an honourable place in the saga of India's freedom.

In Pakistani textbooks the early 1930s acquire a landscape strikingly different from the one we see in Indian texts. The contrast arises out of three factors: focus on Iqbal's Allahabad speech, lack of emphasis on Civil Disobedience, and the importance given to all three Round Table Conferences. The key issue, according to every text, is the Congress's refusal to acknowledge the minority problem. We see it in certain texts in highly personalized terms as a struggle between Gandhi and Jinnah. S.F. Mahmud's text is somewhat exceptional in that it attempts to indicate the ethos of the early 1930s, though it does so extremely briefly. The text says that as a result of the Civil Disobedience Movement,

Hindus became very confident and the words as well as the attitude of their leaders began to show that the *Purna Swaraj* which they now began to demand, meant the rule of the majority in India, that is the Hindus. The Muslims became alarmed and the differences between the two groups became more marked. Political awakening among the masses of both the communities widened this gulf and there were clashes in many places which developed into Hindu-Muslim riots.⁶

Although it is somewhat simplistic to attribute the widening of the communal divide directly to 'political awakening', this statement is perhaps the only one we find in the school literature of the subcontinent which permits the reader to wonder about a relationship between democracy and the consolidation of collective self-identity in an early stage of modernization. The sociology of incipient modernity and nationalism has been a subject of considerable research which points to the expression of religious and other ethnic identities as a common outcome.⁷ Mahmud's book does not elaborate on this, but we must give it credit for giving a hint, although it is true that the hint can be easily misconstrued as a criticism of democracy.

Mahmud's point that the Civil Disobedience Movement brought about self-confidence, if only among the Hindus—an exaggeration, though it is true that Muslim participation was low—is contradicted by several Pakistani texts. They either criticize Civil Disobedience or ignore it. Rabbani and Sayyid's textbook says that the Civil Disobedience Movement failed and exposed the Congress position regarding the boycott of the First Round Table Conference. 'The Congress wanted to wriggle out of this situation in a

dignified manner,' this textbook says, while the government was keen to ensure the Congress participation at the Second Round Table Conference and that is why the Gandhi-Irwin pact took place. Release of Civil Disobedience detenus under this pact provides this text the only reason to let its readers know that arrests had been made. Gandhi's Dandi March and the repression that followed it are ignored. Gandhi's attitude at the Second Round Table Conference is described as 'resolute and stubborn'. The text constructs a dialogue between Gandhi and Jinnah in these words: 'Gandhi insisted that there was only one nation in India which were Hindus. But the Quaid-e-Azam replied that Indian Muslims were also a separate nation of India which had its own interests.'⁸

The only two textbooks that attempt to provide a plausible explanation of the Congress stand and strategies are those by Bajwa and Hussain. The interpretation given by these authors deserves careful reading, especially with a view to comparing their interpretations with the ones we noted in our reading of the Indian texts. At the start of his section on the Round Table Conferences, Bajwa recalls that the Congress and the League had both boycotted the Simon Commission. The Congress responded to the announcement of a Round Table Conference in London by insisting on two commitments: one, that the conference was aimed specifically at drafting a scheme to give India a Dominion Status; and two, that the terms agreed upon in London would be implemented. When the government expressed its inability to give any such undertaking, the Congress decided not to participate in the Round Table Conference and, moreover, declared complete independence as the only goal. Bajwa mentions the boycott of assemblies and a general campaign of Civil Disobedience, but reminds

his readers that the Muslim League stayed away from this call, and that the Khilafat leader, Mohammad Ali, called on Muslims to ignore the Congress call. The text offers no guesses why the Muslim response to Civil Disobedience was so negative. A little later, while discussing the Second Round Table Conference, Bajwa indicates how a three-way impasse developed. He says:

Gandhi refused to recognise the problem of minorities within the subcontinent and dubbed them 'communalists' and 'hangers-on'. The Muslim League had a strong delegation again with both Allama Iqbal and M.A. Jinnah attending. There was obviously little chance of an agreement with Congress taking such a hard line and the situation became more complicated with non-caste Hindu leaders demanding separate electorates for themselves.⁹

The gist of Bajwa's approach is to put the onus of intransigence on the Congress, especially on Gandhi, focusing mainly on the politics of the early 1930s. Ignoring Gandhi's activism and mass mobilization, Bajwa's text retains a studious identification with Jinnah and closes the discussion of the early 1930s by citing Jinnah's disillusionment with everybody—the Congress, the British, as well as the leaders of the Muslim community who were 'constantly fighting with each other'.

The text by J. Hussain takes a wider look at this period; it reports on the Congress, and looks inside it as well. Although this text calls the chapter covering the period from 1927 to 1940 'The Idea of Pakistan', it offers a wide-ranging fare to the young reader, including a separate section on Jawaharlal Nehru and one on the Poona Pact.

No Indian textbook accords this status to the young Nehru or to the Gandhi-Ambedkar agreement. Another special feature of this text is that it reminds the young reader that the Congress platform was used by radicals of both the secular and the communal variety. Hussain's write-up on Nehru traces a number of similarities between him and Jinnah, e.g. their command of English and their faith in progress and equality. 'But while Jinnah believed in the necessity of legal guarantees of equality, Jawaharlal Nehru placed his faith in economic progress. Jawaharlal Nehru saw the British Empire as the single greatest cause of poverty and economic stagnation in the subcontinent.'¹⁰ The text suggests that Nehru's demand for a joint electorate for building a strong, secular state was deceptively supported by Hindu extremists who believed that 'they could establish a Hindu state because the Hindus were in majority'. Hussain also devotes a section to the Communists and provides a brief life sketch of Dada Mir Haider, one of the accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case, who was described by British intelligence as the most dangerous among Indian leftists, 'not because of any fondness of violence, but because of his working class identity and ceaseless efforts'.

This text discusses the Civil Disobedience Movement without mentioning the Muslim League's negative response to it. Gandhi's Salt March, it says, 'caught the world's imagination, and its participants had the world's sympathy when 80,000 to 90,000 people were arrested'. These figures, indicating the scale of British repression, are not mentioned in any other Pakistani or any Indian textbook. Hussain moves on to give an elaborate account of the repression of Civil Disobedience in the Frontier where Abdul Ghaffar Khan led the Khudai Khidmatgars or 'Servants of God'. Iqbal's Allahabad address figures without any discussion,

but the text indicates the worsening state of communal relations by citing that Civil Disobedience ended with communal rioting as Non-cooperation had done in the previous decade. The report on the Second Round Table Conference focuses on the personalities of Jinnah, Iqbal, Gandhi and Nehru, but desists from mentioning the stands taken by them. Hussain attributes the impasse with which this Conference ended to Gandhi's opposition to recognizing that the Scheduled Castes were a community distinct from the Hindus. Finally, the failure of the Third Conference to reach an agreement gives Hussain the opportunity to interpret Jinnah's mood:

At one extreme, some of the Muslim political bosses were solely concerned with their local interests. Relying upon the British to protect them indefinitely from the Hindu majority, they pulled the Muslim League away from compromise. At the other extreme, pulling the Congress away from compromise were the orthodox Hindus, who made no secret of their determination to dominate the Muslims, or of their willingness to indulge in communal rioting.¹¹

If this textbook were not written for children studying in Pakistan, we could well have expected from it a similar explanation of Gandhi's mood at this time. Wasn't he also pulled in different directions, and feeling rather lost? In *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, Judith Brown writes: 'Personally he would have liked to concede all the Muslim demands, but his hands were tied by the views of Congress's own small group of Muslim supporters'.¹² Concerning Gandhi's performance at the Second Round Table Conference, Brown says that on the one hand he offended the leaders of

religious minorities present there by claiming that he alone was India's true representative, and on the other, he alienated the Hindus present by saying that they should give a 'blank cheque' to Muslims.

Gandhi was greatly dispirited by the communal deadlock. His awareness of the impasse and his deep disappointment over it are facts that school histories in both countries have erased. Pakistani school textbooks are not bothered enough about him to record how he felt; for Indian textbooks, acknowledging that Gandhi was not able to handle a situation is taboo.

Late 1930s

All Indian and Pakistani textbooks report the main provisions of the Government of India Act passed in 1935. If the page covering these provisions in an Indian textbook were given to a Pakistani student, and vice versa, neither would notice the mischief. But then, we would have to be careful not to let a single paragraph of the subsequent sections exchange hands this way.

No portion conveys as sharp a contrast between Indian and Pakistani textbooks as the one following the virtually identical coverage of the Government of India Act. Apparently, the two national narratives come together only over the memory of what their colonial masters did, not while recalling what the nationalist leaders did. The two years during which the Congress was in power in seven provinces on its own, and in two others as part of a coalition, receives a startlingly divergent coverage in the textbooks of the two countries. If the organization of national memories for the young were to be regarded as a special compass for divining the past, one could venture to say with some confidence that history had taken a decisive turn towards Partition in the late 1930s.

In Indian textbooks, the late 1930s come across as a gap in the march of events. The gap is partly filled by a brief reference to the work done by the Congress ministries. This reference is so brief—mostly a paragraph—that it does not alter the main impression the young reader might get of this period as a time when nothing important happened in the nationalist movement. Indeed, the discussion of Congress ministries is so sketchy that the period between the announcement of the Government of India Act in 1935 and the outbreak of World War II in 1939 does not qualify even as a minor stopover in the adventurous journey that the narrative of the freedom struggle attempts to provide. That kind of journey-like image, in which major stopovers mean powerful episodes of protest, sacrifice and repression, is best borne out by the capsule-story of freedom which we find in Indian textbooks for eleven-year-olds studying in Class V. These accounts move from Civil Disobedience of the early 1930s directly to the Quit India Movement of 1942. The decade in between is swallowed by a time warp which has supposedly little to offer by way of inspiring material to the pre-adolescent reader.

The few lines that Indian textbooks spend on the main achievements of Congress ministries mostly list anti-usury and tenancy legislations to improve the state of peasants, release of political prisoners, and reforms in health services and education. Barring one or two exceptions, Indian textbooks do not specify the nature of educational reform. For the precise name of Gandhi's scheme of innovative education which the Congress governments adopted as a policy, we must turn to the pages of Pakistani textbooks. But there, the scheme is roundly condemned, as we shall presently see. It is quite puzzling why Indian school historians choose not to name and elaborate on the Wardha

Scheme. Surely, such a discussion would arouse children's curiosity because the problems that Gandhi had noted at the Wardha conference can still be seen in any school. Also, it would provide a break from the relentless discussion of politics that constitutes the bulk of any account of this stage of the freedom struggle.

Most Indian textbooks maintain a complete silence on the fact that the formation of the Congress ministry in the United Provinces was not a smooth affair. There was considerable tension within the Congress on the question of the League's participation. The functioning of the Congress government, particularly its programme of educational reform, which was based on Gandhi's Wardha Scheme, aroused a controversy and caused a rift between Hindu and Muslim politicians. The controversy over Gandhian Basic Education figured in other provinces too, but the United Provinces witnessed a wider cultural turmoil on account of the sensitive linguistic situation.

Gandhi's proposal for educational reform was insistent on the use of the child's mother tongue. In the United Provinces, where a serious rift had been developing for a long time between Hindi and Urdu, the policy to promote the mother tongue fell victim to the Hindu-Urdu controversy.¹³ There is a considerable body of historical writing on these topics which would suggest that the Congress ministries did not function in the kind of social climate that Bipan Chandra describes in his Class XII textbook by saying: 'People felt as if they were breathing the air of victory and self-government.' Perhaps some people were breathing freedom, but Gandhi's own assessment seems closer to the unpleasant fact that the atmosphere was filled with communal disharmony.¹⁴ Eminent educationist M. Mujeeb reminds us in a memoir that in 1937 V.D. Savarkar declared India to consist of two

nations—three years before the Muslim League did so. In the same memoir, Mujeeb probes the conflict between the Congress and the League and says that ‘it was very poor statesmanship that transformed a difference of opinion over a ministerial post or two into a national struggle in which a class felt that it was fighting for its life’.¹⁵

One wonders what the Indian school historians gain by presenting the 1937-39 period in so sketchy and inaccurate a manner. The only answer is that by eliminating the record of controversy, the textbooks sustain the young reader’s impression that the Congress was a moral force, not merely a political party. Even this impression, however, would have gained strength from the awareness that there was tension within the Congress on the communal issue, that despite this tension, the Congress continued to fight for secularism and social justice. It is more plausible to argue that Indian school historians want to keep the political picture of the last decade of the freedom struggle as sketchy as possible, for they do not expect school-level students to appreciate the intricacies of the political negotiations which shaped the course of events. Whether or not this hypothesis is correct, the text writers’ decision to keep the record one-sided and superficial implies the erasing of the names and contribution of men like K.M. Ashraf, who led the Muslim mass-contact programme, and Zakir Husain, who worked hard to dispel the malicious propaganda of Muslim communalists against Gandhi’s Basic Education proposal.¹⁶ If history teaching at school is mainly pantheon building, as indeed it is for most Indian textbook writers, the absence of such names makes the pantheon considerably poorer.

There is just one Indian textbook which attempts to

make a wider coverage of the late 1930s. This is the ICSE Class X text by Perin Bagli. It not only attempts to record the criticisms made of Congress governments by the Muslim League, it also attempts to give the young readers an idea of regional variations in Muslim politics. Unfortunately, this remarkably well-produced textbook is written in a rather uninterpretive style. Its recording of events is usually more balanced, but why or how they occurred is often left untouched. After giving a fairly detailed view of politics in the late 1930s, Bagli says: 'the Muslims of India were slowly converted to the proposal of a separate state for themselves. The ideology of Iqbal, the visions of Rahmat Ali and the fears of the Muslims, were united by the practical genius of Jinnah'.¹⁷ This dramatic and somewhat mechanical summary may serve as a quotable quote for the examinee interested in scoring well, but it explains little and offers no clue for further inquiry. Was the idea of a Muslim state a part of Iqbal's 'ideology'? Children can hardly examine such a question without access to more knowledge about Iqbal which the text does not provide. What were the fears of the Muslims? The text is silent on this question as well.

Questions of this level are especially important for the present study, for they furnish the space where the perspectives of the Indian and the Pakistani textbook writers on the last decade of the freedom movement can be compared. Before we move on to look at the version of the Pakistani textbooks, it is worth considering one final point in the Indian master narrative—its silence on Iqbal. The poet-philosopher who gave India one of its most popular and evocative nationalist songs is altogether ignored in most Indian school textbooks. The reason is obvious. Iqbal's despair and distance from the Congress during the

last phase of his life pushed him towards the 'communal' end of the 'national-communal' binary which I have discussed earlier. A frequent user of this binary division, Bipan Chandra devotes a substantial paragraph in his Class XII NCERT text to talk admiringly of Iqbal's philosophy and poetry. The paragraph ends abruptly by stating: 'In his earlier poetry, he extolled patriotism, though later he encouraged Muslim separatism.' How and why Iqbal might have encouraged Muslim separatism becomes so inconsequential in this statement that it might as well have said Iqbal caught a virus in his later life. On the question of Muslim fears, Chandra describes them as 'unreasonable' though he acknowledges that the nationalist leaders failed to understand the psychology of minorities.

The late 1930s occupy a significant place in all Pakistani textbooks. Most of them record the fact that the election results were shocking for the Muslim League. Sarwar gives a table showing the comparative performance of the Congress and the League. Most textbook writers quote from the League's manifesto, and Bajwa mentions that it was not very different from that of the Congress. 'Jawaharlal Nehru did not help matters', Bajwa says, 'by declaring that there were only two parties in India, the British and the Congress.' Iqbal's call to Jinnah is noted emotively: 'Iqbal was furious with Nehru's statement and wrote to Jinnah to urge him to prove Nehru wrong and to encourage the Muslim League to throw off its image as a party of rich Muslims and to promise greater help to all Muslims according to Islamic principles'. The election results, this textbook says, 'were not so good' for the League, but Jinnah was 'not too disappointed or discouraged' as it was the first time the League was contesting an election as a mass party. This reading is quite different from what other

Pakistani textbooks provide. Hussain's textbook, for example, offers the explanation that Jinnah had had only six months to prepare for the elections, 'and his fellow Muslims were not yet convinced of the overriding need for unity'.

The new, interpretive style we notice in Pakistani textbooks as they start the history of the final decade of the freedom movement incorporates a wide set of details as the discussion moves towards the formation and functioning of the Congress ministries. The writers of these textbooks emphatically state that a change occurred in the Congress attitude after its good performance in the 1937 elections. Students are told that the Congress became proud and unaccommodating. Hussain's text says that 'Jinnah expected Congress to include distinguished Muslims in its provincial governments for the sake of cooperation and goodwill, just as it was customary in Muslim-majority areas to include Muslims and Sikhs in the ministries'. This and other textbooks elaborate on the conditions placed by the Congress for the inclusion of the League's representatives in the ministries. One of these conditions was the dissolution of the League's identity as a political party. This episode does not figure in every Pakistani textbook; yet, where it does, it reinforces the impression that the Congress leaders saw in 1937 an opportunity to give a lethal blow to Jinnah's political fortunes. Many Pakistani historians have seen this episode as a turning point in Jinnah's life—one which transformed him from an idealist into a political realist.

We have nothing in Indian textbooks on this episode to compare with the Pakistani textbooks' rendering. The Indian silence can be interpreted either as a considered decision on the ground that it adds nothing valuable to the

young student's understanding of the freedom struggle or, alternatively, as a consequence of shortage of space. Though the second possibility cannot be ruled out, given the hurried nature of the coverage that Indian textbooks provide in all subjects, the first interpretation seems more valid.

As the next chapter will show, Indian school historiography treats the Partition as a minor story or a sub-plot in the epic of freedom. The occurrences that contributed to the fulfilment of this sub-plot are treated as being structurally outside the saga of freedom, though they are intertwined with events forming the saga. Thus, even if the Indian school historians accepted the view that the formation of ministries, particularly in the United Provinces, became the context of a further widening of the Congress-League rift, this episode proves dispensable because the text is not expected to explain how the League's separatist tendency acquired strength and momentum. That the League had this tendency, or rather this kind of character, is assumed in an earlier stage of the story in certain textbooks—as early as 1906. In this sense, the Indian school texts corroborate the Pakistani textbooks' claim that Pakistan has a history longer than the specific demand to create it. Together, Indian and Pakistani textbooks can be seen as voices in a joint discourse which paints Pakistan as an attitude or as an innate tendency, rather than a politically conceived and accomplished project.

Returning to the Pakistani account of the late 1930s, it is instructive to notice that very few among them specify that the political differences between the League and the Congress over the formation of ministries acquired an operative significance mainly in the United Provinces. The tendency to generalize that we have noted earlier in different contexts, is powerful in this episode too. We see it getting

stronger in the section that follows the formation of ministries, and focuses on their functioning. This section has nothing to say about the land reforms and other ameliorative measures which the Congress initiated, and which the Indian textbooks list, though in a sketchy manner. The thrust in Pakistani textbooks is on three developments, which are all connected with Gandhi's Wardha Scheme. It is an unusual focus. For an Indian researcher, this attention comes as a surprise, partly because it concerns an educational programme that we have been accustomed to seeing as an innovative and socially reconstructive one. In Pakistani textbooks we find it discussed as a politically motivated programme of cultural destruction.

Basic Education

Not a single Pakistani textbook mentions that Gandhi's main intention was to find an alternative to the bookish, examination-oriented system of colonial education. More interestingly, we find no mention whatsoever that the focus of the Wardha Scheme was to integrate children's learning of different subjects with training in a manual craft. Of course, it is true that Indian textbooks also do not mention this feature of Gandhi's scheme, suggesting thereby that it is of no historical importance.

Pakistani school historians present the Wardha Scheme purely in terms of the ethos of schools, reconstructed with the help of practices like the singing of *Vande Mataram*, hanging of pictures of Gandhi and of the goddess Saraswati, and the emphasis on Hindi. Though these practices were not directly a part of Gandhi's proposal for Basic Education which the Congress governments adopted, they perhaps acquired greater visibility in the context of the school's

daily routine. The view of *Vande Mataram* as an anti-Muslim song, and the conflict between Hindi and Urdu—both had a longer history; what brought them to the surface of public life and attention was in the context of an educational change triggered off by Gandhi's proposal. Gandhi's own personality and reputation as a Mahatma cannot be dissociated from the perceptual frame that Pakistani textbooks construct for discussing the Wardha Scheme. Nor can we discount the impact of other contemporary circumstances, particularly the growing influence of Hindu revivalist movements like *Shuddhi*, on the perception of Basic Education as a 'Hindu' conspiracy. Also, the Hindi-Urdu controversy had already matured to the point that in 1937 it was ripe for political use in the context of an educational reform which made the use of mother tongue mandatory in children's education.¹⁸

The vehemence with which Basic Education is condemned in Pakistani textbooks is bewildering. Considering how little education figures in histories of nation-states—even scholarly histories rarely discuss the impact or the role of education—it comes as a surprise to find a proposal for educational change being given so much credit, even though negative, for influencing the course of events. The strongly negative portrayal of Gandhi's scheme that we find in Pakistani textbooks does not even mention the title of Gandhi's proposal, let alone give any details about its reception in society. To make sense of the treatment it receives at the hands of Pakistani school historians, let us first look at the words some of them use:

The Wardha Scheme of education which was a creation of Gandhi's mind was implemented by the Congress Government in the provinces. This was

an essentially communal scheme shot through and through with Hindu ideals. The teaching of religion was completely ignored, and this amounted to an attempt to disengage the Muslim child from his faith. Muslim children were obliged to honour the Congress flag, to sing *Bande Mataram*, to wear home-spun cloth (*khadi*) and to worship (the words *Puja ki jawe* were used) Gandhi's portrait. (Sarwar)¹⁹

The Wardha Scheme was an outcome of Gandhi's philosophy. It inculcated the Hindu nationalism and principles of non-violence. It aimed at creating a high respect among the young minds for the Hindu heroes and religious leaders. The Wardha and Widdia Mander schemes sought to isolate the young generation of the Muslims from their religion, culture and civilisation . . . It aimed at injecting the political ideas of one political party, the Congress, into the minds of Muslim children. (Rabbani and Sayyid)²⁰

In schools Hindi was introduced instead of Urdu. Before the commencement of classes the students saluted the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi and Muslim students were also forced to do so. The Hindus introduced the anthem entitled 'Bande Matram' which contained feelings of hatred for the Muslims. (Punjab Textbook Board)²¹

'A Basic Education' scheme was launched by Gandhi at Wardha, later known as the Wardha Scheme, and was introduced in all Congress education ministries. Spinning by hand was made a part of the school curriculum and teaching was to be in Hindi with no religious education which meant

that Muslim students were at a disadvantage. School children were also required to show reverence for Gandhi's portrait which was hung up in their schools. (Bajwa)²²

The last quotation is from Bajwa's textbook which belongs—along with J. Hussain's *Illustrated History*—to a pedagogically superior class of textbooks available in Pakistan. This quotation gives us an inkling of the core issue that maligned Basic Education so summarily in the perception of anti-Congress Muslims in 1937. It is a perception with which the writers of these textbooks apparently identify. The core issue was the absence of religious instruction in 'Basic' schools. It is interesting to recall that Gandhi had deliberately left out religious instruction from his scheme. On being asked by a group of visitors why he had done so, he told them: 'We have left out the teaching of religion from the Wardha Scheme of education because we are afraid that religions as they are taught and practiced today lead to conflict rather than unity. But on the other hand I hold that the truths that are common to all religions can and should be taught to all children. These truths cannot be taught through words or through books—the children can learn these truths only through the daily life of the teacher.'²³

Even if we assume that the negative perception of Gandhi's scheme arose mainly from its avoidance of religious instruction, the intensity with which the scheme is condemned in Pakistani textbooks calls for further scrutiny. It is clear from the quotations given above that the pedagogic aspects of Basic Education have no interest for these school historians. Their concern is confined to the ethos in which the scheme was put into practice and which, in their judgement, it was supposed to reinforce. The policy to

favour Hindi, the respect shown to Gandhi's ideals—which were, of course, the same as the Congress party's declared ideals—and the singing of *Vande Mataram* were among the major ingredients of that ethos. Hussain's textbook, which cares for details and explanation in almost every other context that we have examined so far, is unusually brief and shrill on this matter. This is all it has to say about the functioning of Congress ministries:

Once in power from 1937 to 1939, the Congress ministries in the Hindu majority areas confirmed the Muslims' fears. They were corrupt, discriminatory, and terribly insensitive. Hindi replaced Urdu as the language of provincial governments and the medium of instruction. Gandhi's picture hung everywhere, and Congress party's flags flew from public buildings. An anti-Mughal poem, written by a Hindu extremist, was adopted as the national anthem. Particularly in the UP, the Muslim elites were shocked to find their power, laboriously built up since the days of Sir Sayyid, suddenly lost to Congress.²⁴

Although this excerpt from Hussain's book is quite out of tune with the general style and approach of her book—in the sense that the patience for explaining and the specificity of detail we see elsewhere is missing here—it does impel us to look more deeply at the 1937-39 period, particularly at the implementation of the Wardha Scheme. We will do that with the help of two extraneous sources: one Indian, the other Pakistani. The first is a memoir by M. Mujeeb to which we have referred earlier.²⁵ This memoir is important for us in the present context because Mujeeb's own contribution to Basic Education is well known. Not only

was he the Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, an institution where the Wardha Scheme found some of its most committed exponents, he also wrote a biography of Zakir Husain which gives considerable attention to the latter's experience as the chairman of the Wardha Education Committee.²⁶ Few people today seem aware of the enormous work Zakir Husain did to popularize Basic Education against all odds—both institutional and socio-political. Mujeeb commemorates Husain's work in as objective a manner as one might think possible. Given this background, it is important that we listen to Mujeeb's memory of 1937-39 when Basic Education was introduced as a policy of Congress governments.

Mujeeb draws the general picture of the ethos in the United Provinces by recalling a variety of changes that were taking place. In the sphere of political culture, he recalls 'something unbearably upstartish' in the behaviour of Congress underlings. In the sphere of language, he records that 'Urdu lost its legal position almost overnight'. He talks about the impact of land reforms undertaken by the Congress which hurt the land-owning Muslim upper class.²⁷ As it is, this class was feeling nervous in the face of the overwhelming mass support the Congress had received in the elections. Most of the new leaders of the Congress, Mujeeb recalls, were not known to the Muslims, hence they were regarded 'not persons, but just Hindus'. Mujeeb's memory draws the picture of a nervous, beleaguered elite taking recourse to mobilizing mass support by making an appeal to Islam as it had done earlier at the time of Khilafat, but this time, the source of threat was cited as being nearer home. Indignation, fear and anger took the help of rumours, and this is how popular imagination perceived Gandhi's scheme of Basic Education:

When some Muslim critics of the scheme of basic education came across the recommendation in the syllabus of basic education that movements to the rhythm of music or elementary dance movements should form part of the physical culture activities in the school, they picked upon it as an indication that in the new schools Muslim girls would be forced to learn dancing. No deductions made from this could be too wild, and basic education stood condemned not only as an attack on Muslim culture but on all ideas of decency.²⁸

Around the same time, Mujeeb recalls, the Chief Minister of the Central Provinces, Ravi Shankar Shukla, introduced a scheme to seek land endowments for schools from the local people. 'These schools were to be called Vidya Mandirs or temples (lit. houses) of knowledge,' Mujeeb says. Though these schools had no relation to the national policy of Basic Education, 'they were criticised by the Muslims as an attempt to turn schools into temples'. Mujeeb concludes this recollection by saying:

These were the major 'atrocities' to which others were added, and the fuse was lighted for the explosion which ultimately split up the common country into India and Pakistan.²⁹

Going by Mujeeb's memoir, it becomes easy to guess why Indian school texts do not record the memory of Basic Education. If indeed the scheme made so vital a contribution to the larger processes that led to Partition that a nationalist Indian Muslim like Mujeeb has no reluctance testifying it, it does make sense why school histories written for Indian children would choose to 'forget' it. They are, after all, histories of India's national movement, not histories of

India's Partition. The burden of explaining Partition falls on the shoulders of Pakistan's school historians, and they carry it by identifying fully with the voices of 1937-39 that spread the amazing stories of Basic Education Mujeeb has illustrated. Education symbolizes the future, and those who saw Basic Education as a scheme to alienate Muslim children from their culture and religion must have perceived it as a critical moment to wake up.

The second source that throws some light on the contribution that Basic Education made to the ethos of the late 1930s is a novel by Mumtaz Shah Nawaz who died in 1949 at the age of thirty-five. Her novel, *The Heart Divided*, from which we will quote an excerpt concerning the Wardha Scheme, was written between 1943 and 1948. It was some time in the early 1940s that Mumtaz Shah Nawaz shifted her political loyalties from the Congress to the Muslim League. Her novel, popularized in recent years by a feminist organization in Pakistan, presents the story of three sisters who fared very differently in the 1930s. Many of the events are presented from the perspective of Zohra, a modern, politically sensitive college student who appears to be the autobiographical voice of the novelist.³⁰

The following conversation takes place in Patna when Zohra's sister, Sughra, goes there all the way from Lahore to watch the Muslim League's annual session in 1938. She stays with her cousin, Saida, whose husband is a young, politically active lawyer. He invites a number of his friends, some of whom have come from other towns as Sughra has in order to attend the League's session. Here is how they talk about Basic Education:

'Life under the Congress regime is becoming impossible,' said one young man. 'We cannot go on like this. Something drastic will have to be

done.' 'Things are getting worse each day', said another, who had come from Nagpur, 'and it is the same in all the minority provinces. Muslims cannot get justice or even decent treatment under the Congress governments. To my mind this acceptance of the Vidya Mandir Scheme is just about the limit. If we accept this, we shall lose for ever our language, our culture, and in time our children will even forget their own faith ...'

'Forgive my ignorance,' said Sughra, 'but what exactly is the Vidya Mandir Scheme? Of course I have seen from the papers that there has been a storm of protest against it among the Muslims and they mention its many obnoxious features, but exactly what are they?'

'It's a part of the Wardha Scheme of education. To begin with, we object to schools becoming mandir (temple), then images of the so-called goddess of learning are installed there and our children are taught idolatrous worship before these and also made to bow and kneel before images and photographs of Gandhi.'

'Not really?'

'That is by no means all! Our children are forced to discard all tokens of their own religion and culture, just imagine they have to give up even their traditional greeting—Aslam-o-Alaikum, but are made to sing the Bande Matram every day.'

'What tyranny!'

'The whole educational plan is calculated to destroy Muslim culture, learning and religion. Urdu has been replaced by Hindi which is something called

Hindustani to mislead people, even from there words of Persian and Arabic are being weeded out. Perhaps the worst thing is the way history books have been changed. There is gross abuse of Muslim kings and emperors, and our national heroes are derided ...'³¹

If we read this fictionalized conversation along with Mujeeb's memoir, we can construct a slice of the ethos which prevailed among the Muslim elite in the late 1930s. It is the same ethos that we find depicted in today's Pakistani textbooks. Evidently, the Pakistani school historians have chosen to look at the late 1930s, particularly at the Wardha Scheme, entirely from the perspective of the Muslim elite of that period. A balanced historical perspective would allow the young Pakistani readers of today to realize that Gandhi's scheme fell victim to the contemporary milieu—both in terms of its application, especially in the Central Provinces, and also in terms of its perception. In that case, the Pakistani text authors might also consider sparing an appreciative word for Gandhi's real intention and strategy, and perhaps for the efforts that Zakir Husain made to dispel the misconceptions that plagued the scheme. But then, the Pakistani school historian would not be writing a narrative tuned to the national ideology. A parallel hypothetical case can be made for the Indian historians who choose to ignore the Wardha Scheme, as well as the ethos which it had the misfortune to face.

The significance that Pakistani textbooks attach to the late 1930s calls for a critical review of the overall epistemic character of 'Pakistan Studies'. The significance of the 1937-39 period is expressed both by the space given to the events of this period and the tone in which they are

reported. Both suggest the view that the experiences of this period had a decisive influence on the demand for a separate Muslim state even though the seeds of this demand or its urge had existed earlier. It is interesting to ask whether the textbooks are telling children how the story of Pakistan unfolded, or are they showing how the probability of a united India gaining freedom declined? The first interpretation would mean that the textbooks are presenting a teleologically conceived history, which treats the eventual outcome as destiny and, that the teacher is expected to show how this destiny was fulfilled. In this view of the past, events have limited significance, for they are conceptualized as examples of a tendency, not as specific happenings. If the second interpretation is upheld, it would imply that each event had its own character and impact which need assessment. The second interpretation also implies that the historian is not being guided by an ideological commitment to the supreme political correctness of the outcome.

Looking at the treatment of the 1937-39 period in Pakistani textbooks, one feels that their authors are deeply ambivalent. As we have noticed in the context of several earlier occasions, Pakistani textbook writers are ideologically committed to the theoretical basis of Pakistan. This is clear from the lengthy projections they make into the past in search of the seeds of the idea of Pakistan. We are not talking here about writers who spot the idea of Pakistan as early as the ninth century. We are referring to the writers of more sober textbooks, some of whom explain why the Congress ministries resigned by referring to the war. These textbooks explain the Congress's policy towards the war in greater detail than several Indian textbooks do. Bajwa's textbook devotes a paragraph to the terms Jinnah conveyed

to the Congress in November 1939—a month before the Congress ministries resigned—for a settlement. Bajwa says, ‘With the Congress in no mood to compromise with British, it was hardly surprising that they did not respond positively to Jinnah’s offer.’ He also quotes Nehru who said, after the League had called for a celebration on the end of the Congress rule, that there now seemed to be ‘no common ground’ between the two parties. Other textbooks focus on the Quaid’s call, and by laying stress on the ‘tyranny and oppression’ of the Congress rule, they pass a decisive negative judgement on the short-lived Congress-League cooperation during the 1920s. Even others, who see the seeds of Pakistan in the post-1857 years or in 1906, are surprisingly keen to portray the late 1930s in a manner that would suggest the possibility of India emerging into freedom as a single country, if only the Congress had behaved differently after its victory in 1937.

*Glory and Grief:
The Final Years*

At no earlier point did the Indian and the Pakistani narratives look so irreconcilable as they did in their coverage of the late 1930s. Having gone through this patch, one feels psychologically prepared to find even greater contrast in the rest of the two master narratives. One presumes that the narrative of freedom, for the seven years that remain, is going to be starkly different in the two sets of textbooks. Our prior knowledge of the end and of the rapid course of events which preceded it also predisposes us to expect a sharp contrast between the Indian and the Pakistani narratives. As Independence draws close, we imagine that the text writers would view it in the light of the supreme clarity that belongs, in any grand narrative, to the end alone.

As the two narratives enter the early 1940s, they fulfil

our expectation of finding a sharp contrast between the national perspectives embedded in them. The expansive character that the Pakistani narrative acquires at this point has been mentioned earlier. The Indian narrative, by contrast, acquires an unusual reluctance to divulge details. However, both maintain a selective silence on certain events and on the probable causes of these events. Disinterestedness in the 'other' grows fast as we hurtle towards the decisive mid-1940s. Well before reaching the point at which a formal division took place, the memory covering the jointly experienced past gets divided.

Quit India

In Indian textbooks, the early 1940s are remembered primarily for the Quit India movement. It is reconstructed as a grand event which highlights the spirit of adventure that is the leitmotif of the Indian narrative of freedom. After the rejection of the Cripps Mission, the young reader learns about the popular mood as being one of discontent and anger.

The Class XII NCERT text tells its readers with confidence that while the people of India 'fully sympathised with the anti-fascist forces, they felt that the existing political situation in the country had become intolerable'. This text is among the few which mention, even if only in passing, the impact of wartime shortages and rising prices. The atmosphere of anxiety and frustration that most other textbooks construct is mainly political, with Gandhi serving as a hero whose feelings, thoughts and words are said to be one with the people's. Bagli's textbook quotes Gandhi's remark: 'Leave India in God's hands, or in modern parlance, to anarchy. Then all parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to reasonable agreement.' The Indian people, this text says,

confirmed 'with their blood' the Congress resolution to force the English to leave India immediately.

In terms of the narrative of the freedom movement, the nature and structure of the Quit India movement makes it a perfect topic for detailed treatment by school historians. All the key elements of the narrative established so far—adventure, heroism, moral struggle and determination—find flamboyant expression in the reporting of the Quit India movement. No wonder its representation in textbooks overshadows every other detail relevant to the study of the early 1940s. First, its name evokes the image of a nation that has made up its mind. Translated into Hindi, it becomes even more evocative. The title is self-explanatory and makes no demand that we first make sense of the background, as was the case with the salt *satyagraha*. As an idea, 'Quit India' personifies the rejection of any need to come to terms with someone whose presence is not appreciated. Secondly, Gandhi's exhortation to 'do or die', which most Indian texts mention, gives an added ring of finality. Apart from these formal features, the Quit India movement was also marked by events which excite the imagination of young readers. Not just demonstrations and strikes, but repressive violence on a shocking scale sets apart this final anti-colonial rebellion. The measures taken by the British administration to suppress it, such as mass shooting, torture and air strikes, make the August rebellion a uniquely heroic national memory of the final phase of British rule in India.¹

The dramatic confrontation between heroic sacrifice and brutal repression, which made the Quit India movement such a momentous event, can be held responsible for the Indian school historian's inability to represent it as a political event. In one textbook after another we find the

Quit India movement portrayed exclusively as the ultimate patriotic adventure with no trace of politics. The portrait can hardly bear the inclusion of background factors, such as the despair and gloom that had descended on the Congress after the failure of the Cripps Mission's visit, and Gandhi's mid-1942 impression that the Allied forces were going to lose the war.² The Indian school historian also eliminates other inconvenient facts, such as the deep doubts that leaders like Nehru and Rajagopalachari had about the correctness of Gandhi's approach.

Quit India is described in Indian textbooks in a purely celebratory manner, allowing no questions on issues like Gandhi's willingness to risk violence, in total contrast to his earlier stance during Civil Disobedience and Non-cooperation. Perhaps more than any other event of modern Indian history, Quit India, as represented in school textbooks, shows that the freedom struggle is not supposed to be taught or learnt as history, but rather as a moral tale with historical content. In most textbooks used in India, Quit India is followed by a substantial section on the Indian National Army (INA). Once again, in this section we are struck by the school historians' willingness to assume the role of storyteller, their excitement over the design of an event clouding their responsibility as interpreters of the past. To the young reader of these texts, it could well seem as if the spirit of Quit India, led by Gandhi, was carried forward by the INA, led by Subhas Chandra Bose. No author reminds the student that there was no similarity of perspective between Gandhi and Bose. Only the senior-level text by Bipan Chandra makes the appreciable effort to tackle the problem by saying that even though Bose's strategy 'of winning freedom by cooperation with fascist powers was criticised at the time

by most Indian nationalists, by organising the INA he set an inspiring example to the Indian people and the Indian Army’.

Lahore Resolution

It is little wonder that while covering these heady portions of the history of the early 1940s, authors of Indian textbooks ‘forget’ to mention the strides made by the Muslim League since the late 1930s. We have to turn to Pakistani textbooks to get news of the Lahore Resolution: hardly any Indian text gives it. Every Pakistani textbook virtually stops the narrative flow in order to celebrate the Lahore Resolution. We hear about its historic significance before we are given its content and an elaborate comment on its spirit. Just as Indian textbooks specify the Gawalia Tank Maidan as the venue of Gandhi’s 8 August speech, Pakistani texts name Minto Park (now Iqbal Park where the Minar-e-Pakistan stands) as the venue where the Lahore Resolution was passed on 23 March 1940. The Lahore Resolution stands like a commanding peak in the landscape of the early 1940s in Pakistani textbooks just as the Quit India movement does in the Indian textbooks. This basic difference is indicative of the rival landscapes in which the last phase of the freedom movement unfolds in the two sets of school textbooks.

Unlike Indian textbooks which represent this phase in continuity with the previous one, Pakistani texts frame the 1940s as a distinct period. What is new about it, according to them, is the clarity and cohesiveness that the Muslim League attained following its experience of the two years of Congress rule. This clarity was not born of a new vision or realization; rather, it is said to have resulted from the removal of doubts and illusions. Indeed, most textbooks

examined in this study refer at this point to the earlier incarnations of the two-nation theory and the idea of Partition, starting with Syed Ahmad Khan. Surprisingly, textbooks as different as Bajwa's and the one by Rabbani and Sayyid share the choice of 23 March 1940 as a moment to take a long look at the past in search of the seeds of the two-nation theory. Bajwa casts his gaze backwards in time, as well as around at developments in other parts of the world in search of supporting ideas for the incipient nationhood of the yet-unborn Pakistan. He makes a vague reference to Europe after the first war, suggesting that 'religion, not allegiance to a community or culture was a motivating force for nationalism, not just in the Indian subcontinent but in other parts of the world as well'. Without offering an example—obviously because there are none—he moves on to suggest that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was 'the first Muslim who deserves credit for pointing out that Hindus and Muslims, by the standards of modern nationalism, were separate nations'. References to Rahmat Ali and Iqbal follow, and finally Bajwa mentions the change that occurred in Jinnah's perspective as a result of his 'better experience of dealing with Congress leaders'. The conclusion offered to children is that now, in March 1940, it became clear that the Muslim League 'would push for independence not only from the British but also from the Hindus'.

We can identify in Bajwa's discussion of the Lahore Resolution the dominant tone of the Pakistani master narrative of freedom in this final patch. It is primarily an explanatory tone. It stands in direct contrast to the note of indifference towards the Lahore Resolution that we find in the Indian textbooks. The indifference of Indian authors serves to push the two-nation theory to the margins of the narrative. On the other hand, the Pakistani authors appear

to be gripped at this juncture by the urge to trace and re-trace the familiar record of past references to Hindu-Muslim differences and the idea of Partition. These references are strung together so as to make them look like a continuous trajectory. In a number of Pakistani textbooks the trajectory includes not just Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Iqbal, and Rahmat Ali, but Lajpat Rai and Savarkar as well. These last two names are simply never mentioned in Indian textbooks in the context of the idea of Partition, not even by those authors who emphasize the contribution made by Hindu revivalist-nationalists towards the worsening of Hindu-Muslim hostilities in politics.

The discourse and the role of Hindu nationalism get far greater attention in Pakistani textbooks; but then, the brush used by Pakistani authors is too thick to show the difference between the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha. Pakistani textbook authors simply adopt Jinnah's stance. From the 1930s onwards, he insisted on calling Gandhi a Hindu leader and the Congress a Hindu party. This is what Pakistani textbook writers do. Indian textbook writers, on the other hand, use the secular-communal duality to distinguish the Congress from both the League and the Hindu Mahasabha. This classification is, in its own way, too coarse to highlight the finer points of difference between the pressures that plagued the Congress from outside and the ones that troubled it from within.

Quit India is mentioned in all Pakistani textbooks, but unlike the Indian account, it is a detached, uninspiring story. As one goes through the few lines that cover the massive repression that took place during the August and September of 1942, one is reminded of the passage of time since the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. The brutality of that incident finds a mention characteristically different from

the reference that the repression following the Quit India rebellion receives in Pakistani textbooks. We can clearly see how, as an instrument of shaping collective memory, history textbooks play an active role by discriminating between victims of violent repression in two episodes on the basis of the political conditions surrounding them. The only exception is J. Hussain's textbook which gives a realistic estimate of the number of people, including women, killed by the British, in the August of 1942. She does, of course, record the Muslim League's condemnation of the Quit India movement. She also mentions the fact, as few other Pakistani school historians do, that the Muslim League 'was happy to benefit from the inactivity of the Congress while its leaders were under arrest'. This little tail of a sentence is the only one we can find, in the two sets of textbooks put together, hinting at the momentous political change that occurred in the years following the Quit India movement.

How the Congress and the League acquired an equal status in their negotiations with the British during the final rounds of the politics of the freedom struggle, how the Muslim League became a mass party before the election of 1946, and why Gandhi did not attempt to stage a mass movement to keep India united, are among the teasing questions that many youngsters in both countries may ask, but neither textbooks nor teachers, who are constrained by these textbooks, are equipped to answer.

Indian Brevity

The pace at which Indian textbook accounts of the final stage of the freedom movement move is so fast that many of the salient political events of this period are reduced to nominal mention. The details offered are so sketchy and

the account so brief, that a student who may want to make sense of these events and judge the relative importance of each development in the chain of events that led to Independence and Partition, can only get puzzled. The Cabinet Mission and the complex plan it proposed are mentioned in Indian textbooks, but what precisely the plan was, and why it failed are left unexplained. To grasp what the Cabinet Mission was proposing for maintaining India's unity is not easy; it requires an acquaintance with several basic details of the proposal. Why it failed is an even more demanding question that requires a painstaking review of the response it received from the two major parties. Such a review can hardly be made without acknowledging the claims and counter-claims made by contemporary commentators and historians.³

Why Indian school historians do not treat the Cabinet Mission plan as a historical event important enough to deserve careful attention is a question we cannot hope to answer in isolation from the general treatment that events of this period receive in Indian textbooks. Before making that attempt, let us see an example or two of how the Cabinet Mission is represented. Here is the entire description of its proposal given in the senior-level NCERT text by Bipan Chandra:

The Cabinet Mission proposed a two-tiered federation which was expected to maintain national unity while conceding the largest measure of regional autonomy. There was to be a federation of the provinces and the States with the federal centre controlling only defence, foreign affairs and communications. At the same time, individual provinces could form regional unions to which they could surrender by mutual agreement some of their powers.⁴

The shorthand style adopted in this description of seventy words continues in the next one hundred words or so which brings the student as far forward as June 1948—the date initially set for India's Independence by Clement Attlee in February 1947. These hundred words include an explanation of why the Cabinet Mission failed, the different interpretations of the Mission plan by the Congress and the League, the formation of the interim government, the boycott of the Constituent Assembly by the League, and, finally, Attlee's declaration. The plight of the student who might want to know what lies behind this hurriedly drawn thumb-nail sketch with just one hundred words can be imagined. Apparently, the textbook does not anticipate that students of Class XII might wish to *comprehend* the 1945-47 period of the nationalist movement, rather than merely *know* about some of the developments of this period. Other events, like the Simla Conference, the election held for the Central Assembly, and the 3rd June plan are not even mentioned. The Gandhi-Jinnah talks in 1944 are also erased from record.

Other Indian textbooks, with few exceptions, use variations of this shorthand style. In the UP textbook for high school students, the Cabinet Mission plan forms the opening topic of a new chapter called 'Independent India—1947'. The brief opening paragraph informs the reader that the Indian federation envisaged in the Muslim League proposal would have divided the country into four zones. The Constituent Assembly proposed by the Mission, this textbook says, was to be elected by provincial legislatures on the basis of 'communal electorates' and the Congress, despite its consistent insistence on the demand for a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise, accepted the Mission proposal in order to avoid a delay in

Independence. The Tamil Nadu textbook for high school students says that the Cabinet Mission 'recommended the formation of provinces based on the majority of Hindus and Muslims' (sic). Most other textbooks have similar cryptic summaries of the Mission plan. Two exceptions are the ICSE textbook by Perin Bagli and Somendralal Roy's textbook for high school students of West Bengal. Both texts give readers a comprehensible set of basic details, though compression and vagueness characterize their discussion of the reasons why the Mission plan did not work. At least a part of the nebulousness must be attributed to the textbook writers' reluctance to hold the Congress in any way responsible for the failure of the Mission plan. This reluctance compels the writers of school textbooks to forego an opportunity to let the student see how difficult the tasks of decision-making, bargaining, and communication had become in the political climate of the mid-1940s.

Analysts of this period have emphasized these difficulties, both within the Congress and in Congress-League relations.⁵ By failing to acquaint the student with these difficulties, school texts mislead the young readers into thinking that the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, and the final plan to divide India were matters on which clear terms like 'rejection' and 'acceptance' can be applied in an everyday sense. The student is also deprived of the opportunity to think in terms of counterfactuals and to ask whether India would have stayed united for long if the Cabinet Mission plan had worked.⁶

The treatment given in Indian textbooks to the Cabinet Mission and other sub-topics pertaining to the history of this period are inevitably structured around the anxiety to explain why the Congress accepted Partition. This question is embedded at a deep level in the structure of the treatment

given to Partition. It is wrapped around another question which has a place in the popular imagination of the north Indian middle class: 'Why did Gandhiji accept Partition?' By addressing these questions in a tacit manner, school historians attempt to negotiate a labyrinth of assumptions and aims. One aim is to deny the validity of the two-nation theory while explaining *why* Partition was accepted by nationalist leaders like Gandhi and Nehru. That the Partition took place and that it is a historical fact is wound up in the nationalist narrative with a sense of guilt which stems from the underlying assumption that Partition was not entirely inevitable, and that it was *allowed* to take place. The tenor of the larger narrative of the freedom struggle demands that each major step towards Independence is portrayed as a self-consciously intended goal of the Congress which was leading the struggle. This tenor is maintained by upholding the view that the Congress rejected a number of proposals made by the British which were not in the best interests of the country. The Cripps Mission and the Cabinet Mission represented two such proposals. The cursory mention of these missions in most Indian school books enables the writers to sustain the general message of the narrative that the Congress never rested till it got what it wanted. This message imposes on the school historian the onus of explaining why the Congress could not reject Partition.

Apart from this compulsion, the school historian is also under a moral pressure. In substance, this has to do with the opposition between 'nationalism' and 'communalism' maintained throughout the narrative. 'Nationalism' is represented as a source of inspiration which is morally superior to 'communalism'. The superiority arises out of the largeness of the vision that

‘nationalism’, particularly its socially transformative potential, implies. Communalism is represented as a reaction, a regressive effort seeking inspiration from a mythologized past rather than from a rational vision of the future. Nationalism, in its secular character, implies a spirit which transcends older, primordial categories of social life, some of which are based on religion. Since secular nationalism is a superior force, its proponents’ acceptance of a proposal based on religious differences calls for an explanation. In this instance, secular nationalism cannot be portrayed as having achieved what it stood for; its behaviour smacks of defeat or compromise which demands an explanation.

The explanation given has two parts. The first one makes a distinction between the ‘acceptance’ of an impending course of events and ‘acceptance’ of the inspiration that this impending course was based on. The second part consists of mitigating the scale of the success which the morally inferior idea of communalism achieved by forcing Partition. Indian textbooks emphasize that though the Congress agreed to the division of the country, it rejected the two-nation theory on which the division was based. The ‘rejection’ of the two-nation theory is represented as a continued assertion by the Congress of its long-held principles. The acceptance of Partition is attributed to compelling circumstances which left no other alternative. ‘The nationalist leaders agreed to the Partition of India in order to avoid the large-scale bloodbath that communal riots threatened,’ says the NCERT text for Class XII, adding in the next sentence: ‘But they did not accept the two-nation theory.’ Anxious lest the point might be missed, the text goes on to say, assuming the role of the nationalist leaders, that they ‘accepted Partition not because there were two-nations in India—a Hindu nation and a Muslim

nation—but because the historical development of communalism, both Hindu and Muslim, over the past 70 years or so had created a situation where the alternative to Partition was mass killing of lakhs of innocent people in senseless and barbaric communal riots'.⁷

Two more reasons are given. One is that the riots were not confined to one part of India, or else the Congress leaders would have fought to contain them; they had spread everywhere. Secondly, the country was still under alien rulers who were content to carry on their divisive policies, perhaps with an eye on the future of the two newly independent nation-states. Thus, the compulsion of circumstances, or the absence of alternatives for the Congress, is argued as being linked to the threat of uncontrollable Hindu-Muslim violence. The text writer appears to be saying to his young readers that Partition was an outcome of circumstances, not the failure of the Congress's ideology. Other textbooks follow a similar line. For instance, the UP textbook reminds the reader that Hindus and Muslims cannot be said to have formed two nations for they had been part of a shared culture during medieval times, and had fought together in the 1857 revolt as well as later.

Ironically, the 'circumstances' invoked in order to explain the 'acceptance' of Partition remain tightly wound up with the demands of narratology. Excessive brevity helps to mystify the political circumstances, including the role that earlier developments had played in shaping them. The manner in which individual personalities, including the British players, behaved also remains untouched. Indian textbooks unanimously avoid discussing Gandhi's dilemma, which arose from his awareness that the idea of Partition had popular sanction. In her study of pre-Partition politics,

Sucheta Mahajan says: 'The real tragedy, as Gandhi realised all along (but not his critics) was that his alienation from his colleagues reflected his alienation from the people. Leaders reflected popular opinion not only in their acceptance of the Partition, but in their more pragmatic approach to political questions and in their imperfect practice of non-violence.'⁸

It is true that a great deal of historical research on Partition such as Mahajan's has come to light long after some of the textbooks analysed in the present study were originally written. This justification is useful, but it leaves enough room to notice the influence of narratological and ideological compulsions on the portrayal of Partition-related events, including Gandhi's assassination.⁹ Both these compulsions are evident in the school historian's decision to keep the development of both Hindu and Muslim communalism out of the main story of nationalism. The sharp separation of 'secular' and 'communal' politics is a corollary of this decision. Though inspired by the ideology of secularism, this binary separation makes it difficult for the young generation studying the history of the freedom movement today to appreciate the nature of the battle in which leaders like Gandhi, Nehru and Azad were engaged. Gandhi's case is particularly noteworthy. The impression that Gandhi was in full command of the Congress and the people in general burdens the historical figure of Gandhi with an unduly large share of responsibility for allowing Partition.

Pakistani Profusion

While the Indian narrative implicitly attributes to Gandhi the power to prevent Partition, both Indian and Pakistani textbooks ascribe the accomplishment of Partition to Jinnah.

Personification of historical destiny is rarely so succinct as in this case. Indian textbooks refer to Jinnah with articulate resentment. In Pakistani texts, he is portrayed as nothing less than a semi-divine visionary who succeeded against all odds in getting what he wanted. He stands in sharp contrast to Gandhi who, in the Indian textbook version of history, failed to fulfil the expectation he symbolized, in equally superhuman terms. This contrast comes across as the central allegory of both Indian and Pakistani textbooks. Underneath it, however, we find in Pakistani textbooks a complexity similar to what we have discussed earlier in the case of Indian textbooks. It arises rather more from ideological compulsions than from the demands of the narrative of freedom.

The narrative, which traces the beginning of the freedom struggle to 1857, alludes to the two-nation theory soon after the discussion of the 1857 revolt, citing Syed Ahmad Khan as its earliest proponent. By the time the narrative reaches the early 1940s, it has already used the theory a few times to convey a sense of inevitable destiny. By dwelling on the Lahore Resolution (it is referred to as the Pakistan Resolution in most textbooks), the narrative equips itself with a new kind of political content representing the will and determination of a man of vision. All along, the narrative of freedom is structured around the promise or certainty of its conclusion. So strongly and repeatedly does the narrative refer to Pakistan as a goal recognized from the beginning of the freedom struggle, that the only curiosity it can satisfy in the final episode is about how the goal was ultimately attained. Yet, when it comes, the final episode carries the message that Pakistan was the outcome of Hindu intransigence expressed in the unaccommodative attitude of the Congress. Far from looking like inevitable

destiny, Pakistan becomes, in this portion of textbook historiography, a product of political happenings which could well have led to some other outcome.

There is, thus, a deep irony in Pakistan's school historiography as it deals with Partition and Independence. First, there is the irony about Jinnah. His own uncertainty and anguish cannot be fully represented, for it would show his struggle as being merely political. Historian Ayesha Jalal has traced the nature of this struggle in her study of Jinnah, focusing on the evolution of his strategy and intentions.¹⁰ Other studies of the League's pre-Partition politics also show that the trajectory of events took shape in response to several factors; that it was not a pre-planned 'attainment' in any sense.¹¹ The demand for Pakistan remained both geographically and politically vague right up to the end, and that was one reason why Jinnah and others were disappointed when the boundaries were drawn.

Rabbani and Sayyid's textbook quotes Jinnah to convey this disappointment, and like several other textbooks, discusses the Radcliffe Award at length. That Jinnah had to compromise with a situation he did not approve of is mentioned as a Hindu-British conspiracy. S.F. Mahmud, for instance, says that Mountbatten told Jinnah to accept what was offered or else the British would 'leave India to the Hindus'. The textbook published by the Punjab Board says that 'the Congress leaders cajoled Mountbatten to favour them' and he, in turn, 'pressurised Radcliffe to allocate many Muslim majority districts of East Punjab to India and deprive Pakistan of the water of Sutlej, Bias and Ravi'. Despite the need to acknowledge such blemishes in the achievement, every textbook winds up the story of Partition by hailing the fact that Jinnah gave Muslims their own separate homeland where their identity would be

secure. Zafar's textbook reminds the young student that the 'Quaid-e-Azam brought the vision of Sir Syed and the dream of Allama Iqbal into reality.'

Another aspect of the irony has to do with the portrayal of the pre-Partition years as a period of shrewd manoeuvre. Every Pakistani textbook gives elaborate details of each political event that occurred in this period. Once the narratives of freedom enter the post-war period, the contrast between the brevity of the Indian textbooks and the leisurely dilation one sees in the Pakistani texts gets increasingly sharp. It looks as if Pakistani school historians want to stop at each major date while their Indian counterparts want to rush to the end.

Almost every Pakistani textbook earmarks five or six times the space devoted in Indian textbooks for the discussion of the Cabinet Mission plan. This plenitude of the account necessarily imparts to Pakistani narratives a justificatory ring. Each issue and opportunity is discussed as an occasion to recall the skill of political manoeuvre that the League was able to display. Regional narratives also receive generous space, something we see only in token quantities in Indian texts. The intention of not letting the Congress get its way, despite the alleged British backing, is emphasized in most Pakistani accounts. Let us see, for instance, Bajwa's description of how the Muslim League behaved when it finally agreed, under Wavell's persuasion, to become a part of the interim government.

Liaquat Ali Khan took the finance portfolio offered by the Congress who had hoped that a Muslim would be unable to cope with such a technical subject. It was a decision they soon regretted as Liaquat was assisted by competent senior Muslim

civil servants and was able to make life very difficult for Congress ministers requiring money for their departments!¹²

Even without the mark of exclamation at the end, the text writer's delight over the finance minister's endeavour, to wreck the interim government's functioning from within, is evident.

An alternative depiction of this episode appears in the following manner in J. Hussain's text:

At the centre the finance minister, Liaquat Ali Khan presented a budget on 1 March based mainly on Congress's own campaign promises. The budget horrified many wealthy Congress representatives, who had not expected the Congress platform to be implemented.¹³

Hussain's textbook uses this and other happenings, including the resignation of the Unionist Party government in Punjab and the communal violence that broke out subsequently, to reconstruct the spring of 1947. She attempts to provide the young reader with a multi-focus description which highlights one by one, the Congress-League, the British-Indian, the Hindu-Muslim and the Sikh-Muslim dimensions of the mounting tension. How it pushed the Congress towards accepting Partition is made clear enough, but the text distorts the acceptance by calling it 'demand'. Hussain's point is that Pakistan was not wrested by force or manoeuvre; rather the complexity and compulsion of circumstances created a consensus in its favour. This subtext can be read throughout Hussain's treatment of the final phase of the Pakistan Movement. In the context of the North West Frontier Province, the subtext becomes very

unsustainable indeed, particularly when it is placed under the sub-title 'Frontier demands Pakistan'. Hussain's attempt to fit the NWFP story in the narrative of the Pakistan Movement hinges on the impression that Mountbatten got during his visit to Peshawar in April 1947. The League's supporters shouted 'Mountbatten Zindabad'. He came back convinced, Hussain says, that the League's civil disobedience movement had paralysed the administration, and the popular opinion was in favour of Pakistan.

Hussain is not alone among Pakistani textbook writers to remember the NWFP at the time of Partition, and the careful nudging of facts she indulges in for covering up the Frontier tragedy has supporters among professional historians. In his recent history of Pakistan, Ian Talbot indulges in the same exercise by saying that in the June 1947 referendum 'the province's Muslims voted overwhelmingly for Pakistan'.¹⁴ It is not hard to see how inappropriate the term 'overwhelmingly' is in this claim. Those who voted for the NWFP's merger with Pakistan were 50.9 per cent, or a little above half a million people who had the right to vote, and we must remember that the Congress—which had won the 1946 election—had asked for a boycott of the referendum.¹⁵

Violence Sidelined

The NWFP story brings the Pakistani and the Indian master narratives closer together, inasmuch as the former distorts it and the latter overlooks its details. We have seen instances of such commonality between the two master narratives in several other contexts, but nowhere is it as remarkable as in the cursory treatment of the holocaust that followed Partition. The killing and uprootment of millions of people receive no more than a few lines of clerical mention in the textbooks of both countries. Between

the paragraph about the Mountbatten Plan and the Indian Independence Act, most Indian school historians find no space to devote to the mass killing, rapes and forced migration that took place between 15 August 1947 and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi five and a half months later. The politico-administrative character of school historiography achieves unparalleled expression in the maintenance of total silence on the human tragedy that occurred at the time of Partition. Roy's textbook for Bengal and the state textbooks of UP for Classes VIII and X offer stunning examples of this tendency though the former describes the communal frenzy that occurred on the Direct Action Day in Bengal in some detail. The state textbook of Punjab uses half a sentence to acknowledge 'the loss of life and property' and the fact that lakhs were rendered homeless.

The few texts which have a little more to say about the holocaust do so in unevocative, cold words. The following two sentences, taken from the Class VIII NCERT textbook, are typical: 'Unfortunately, the victory of the glorious struggle of the Indian people for independence was tainted by ugly happenings immediately before and after the achievement of independence. Millions lost their homes, several thousand persons were killed.' The senior-level NCERT text adds a few adjectives and trite phrases like 'brother was torn from brother'. Perin Bagli also observes great parsimony in her otherwise comprehensive text in recording post-Partition violence. What distinguishes this otherwise attractive text for ICSE students from other Indian textbooks is its blatant one-sidedness in the characterization of violence and displacement during Partition. This is all we find in Bagli's textbook on how Partition affected the people of India:

The Partition of the country which followed the British withdrawal created new problems. There were Hindu-Muslim riots in many places. Hindus

in Pakistan were massacred in large numbers. Lakhs of refugees came from Pakistan into India. There were similar riots in Bengal. These were a complete disgrace to humanity.¹⁶

This kind of partial perspective is common in Pakistani textbooks and so is the brevity. Rabbani and Sayyid's textbook goes as far as claiming that 'the Hindus and Sikhs had chalked out a systematic programme for the massacre of Muslims'. Generally, Pakistani textbooks follow their Indian counterparts in keeping the description of Partition violence limited to a few unequivocal words. These two sentences from the Punjab state textbook are typical:

After the establishment of Pakistan the entire subcontinent was engulfed in the communal riots. The riots were widespread in Punjab, Delhi, Bengal and Bihar in which fifteen lac people were murdered, 50 thousand women were abducted and more than one crore people had to migrate.¹⁷

The only textbooks that go a little beyond this kind of bare mention are the ones by Bajwa and Hussain. They discuss the riots and mass migration in the wider context of the problem of rehabilitation. The details given are somewhat more vivid, but the overall impression given hardly suffices to distinguish the Partition riots from earlier communal riots.

To seek a plausible explanation of why both Indian and Pakistani textbooks treat Partition so cursorily, we can look in three directions. The first is the direction leading to considerations of a technical or pedagogical nature. One can try to justify the extreme brevity of the mention of Partition violence by recalling that Partition is merely one

of the hundreds of events that have to be covered in the narrative of India's history from ancient times to Independence between Classes VI and VIII, and again in later classes. No event, howsoever momentous or influential, counts for more than any other occurrence. In the endless stream of facts that textbooks present to children, every event is reduced to a mere mention. The case of Pakistani textbooks is similar, despite the fact that the format of 'Pakistan Studies' offers a selective format for the discussion of history. On account of its ideological character and poor syllabus design, the conception of 'Pakistan Studies' has failed to free the school historian from the compulsion to cover everything in a superficial manner.

Until history as a school subject is conceptualized differently, allowing for prioritization of events for in-depth discussion, this technical ground for justifying a perfunctory treatment of Partition has to be granted some validity. Another reason of a similar kind relates to assumptions about children's capacity to cope with the knowledge of conflict and violence. The belief that children should be protected from news or knowledge of conflict is widespread. It is possible that school historians of both India and Pakistan share this belief, and that it impels them to confine the record of the violence associated with Partition to a few words and numbers. The 'happy' aspect of Partition—the fact that it gave Pakistan its birth—is so overwhelming, the Pakistani school historian seems to imply, that its juxtaposition with the tragic aspects of Partition will make the discussion too confusing to be comprehended by young readers.

A second direction leads to the recognition of the ideological constraints or compulsions which impel both the Indian and Pakistani historians to dispose of Partition

as a topic with a brief mention. For somewhat different reasons, both Indian and Pakistani historians could desire to sanitize the narrative of the freedom struggle by avoiding a detailed discussion of the traumatic incidents that marked Partition. Indian school historians typically delineate this final phase of the struggle as a time of vicious manipulation by the British and Muslim communalists.

The mid-1940s get projected in nearly all school textbooks used in India as a period when nationalism suddenly lost both its sense of direction and energy which it had apparently maintained since the 1920s. A cursory mention of Partition riots helps to maintain the theory that Partition was not an outcome of the socio-political conditions which had been gathering momentum for a considerable length of time, quite visibly in fact since the 1920s. It also helps to protect and enhance the celebratory character of the attainment of Independence. If Partition were to be discussed elaborately enough to let the students analyse the socio-political conditions leading to it, the purpose of teaching history at school would have to be defined quite differently. Any liberalization of the goals of teaching history at school, so as to provide stimulus to the student's intellectual development, would appear to endanger the pantheon as well as the canon of the freedom struggle.

In the case of Pakistan, an elaborate discussion of Partition could be seen as involving the serious risk of arousing doubts about the validity of the idea of Pakistan itself, particularly as a nation which was unjustly treated at the time of its birth and which remains perpetually hostile to India. The huge migration of people as a result of Partition was necessitated by the specific nature of the demand for Pakistan and by the geography that the carving out of a new nation implied. Portrayal of the Partition-

related events at any length could well mean the possibility of young students and their teachers feeling impelled to probe the rationality of the two-nation theory which gave birth to the idea of Pakistan. Even though such probing would be addressed to a decision made long ago and to leaders long dead, it would hardly be consistent with the policy of using education to transmit an ideologically tailored picture of the past and the present. Far easier and consistent with this policy is to treat the token teaching of history under 'Pakistan Studies' as an opportunity to socialize the young into an inheritance of rancour.

A third direction for seeking an explanation for the evasive portrayal of Partition in school history can be traced by assessing history itself as a discourse. In an attempt to do so, Gyanendra Pandey has claimed that history, as presently conceptualized, is incapable of dealing with violence and suffering.¹⁸ The language available to the historian, and the discourse in which historiography functions, do not permit the experience of ordinary people, who live through traumatic events like the Partition, to be recognized, Pandey argues. This is why, he feels, recent history-writing appears 'singularly uninterested' in exploring the meaning of Partition for those who have lived through it. Pandey's argument underscores the point made by post-modernist critics of history who contend that in the name of objectivity, history rides roughshod on the memories of ordinary men and women.¹⁹ Going along this line of reasoning, we can say that history as a discipline is so poorly equipped to deal with human suffering that school textbooks of history are of necessity sketchy and dismissive when they deal with a theme like Partition.

In Pandey's critique, history has been contrasted with literature. One way to improve the writing and teaching of

history implicit in critiques of this kind lies in incorporating literary readings in the study of history. Mushirul Hasan's plea for using literature to resurrect the 'many histories' of Partition may be of great interest to those who wish to reform the teaching of history in schools.²⁰ For one thing, such an idea can embolden school practitioners to recognize that pedagogical needs, such as better grasp of a historical context, should take priority over the observance of the conventional parameters of history as a discipline. The use of literature as a resource for support material also has the potential to show that politics and ideologies do not fully account for human behaviour.

In the midst of the barbaric cruelty that the division of India and Pakistan unleashed, there were people who risked their own lives in order to help those whom they might have been expected to harm if religious frenzy were truly *all* pervasive. In memoirs of Partition and in other genres of literature we find ample portraits of such ordinary men and women. A history which focuses on the greats alone fails to acknowledge such action.

The End?

For Indian children, not just the narrative of the freedom struggle but history itself comes to an end in 1947. As a separate subject at the senior secondary level as well as a constituent of 'social studies' in the earlier classes, history runs out of prescribed content after it has covered Partition and some of the events associated with Independence. The choice of these events usually includes the making of the Constitution, the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, integration of the princely states, and the beginning of Five-Year Plans. None of these topics gets the attention it

demands—not even the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. By the time the history teacher reaches this last part of the syllabus and textbook, a sense of haste fills the classroom. The change of weather from mid-February onwards signifies examination-time in the calendar of Indian children and their school. What little time was available earlier for probing and discussion suddenly evaporates. In any case, as far as the teaching of history is concerned, there is nowhere to go, for the officially designed syllabus of history has left the last half of the twentieth century—i.e. the entire history of independent India—as a period outside history. What all has happened in this long patch may filter through in civics classes, cinema and television; history as formally constituted knowledge does not cover it. From that perspective, Partition is the last major event to have occurred in India's long history, and as such it maintains an evocative freshness—both as an item signifying the end of the freedom struggle and as a factor of children's socialization into a political legacy. One can reasonably argue that its symbolic value would change or diminish if India's school history went beyond it.

Partition signifies birth or a new beginning in the narrative of freedom designed for Pakistan's children. It marks no discontinuity, and the narrative smoothly moves on. Unlike the Indian syllabi of history, Pakistani syllabi and textbooks are designed to cover the post-Independence period in detail. Of course, they have every reason to do so, some people might cynically say, for this period constitutes the only real history *Pakistan* can officially call its own. Given the frames of perception we discussed early on in this book, it is hardly surprising that India figures quite often in the post-Independence history of Pakistan. Kashmir is frequently mentioned, and the wars fought

with India are discussed in detail. Textbooks interchange the word 'Bharat' with 'India' in a seemingly unpatterned manner, but if one looks carefully, the former gets preference in contexts that are explicitly hostile. In Pakistan's official perception, which is represented by state-owned television, radio, and state textbooks, India or Hindustan was divided in 1947 into Pakistan and Bharat. The term 'India' continues to be used in English, but the textbooks written in Urdu insist on using Bharat, indicating the importance of naming.

PART III

Future Prospects

Children Write About Partition

While I was writing this book, I had the opportunity to interact with children in two schools: one in Delhi and another in Lahore. These opportunities to talk directly to children were, of course, highly stimulating and precious, but they also made me aware of the disadvantage that a dialogue with children necessarily has as a means of getting to know their views and perspective. It is not easy to refrain from assuming a teacher-like role in a discussion with children. One unknowingly interrupts the flow of the discussion, especially if several children want to talk at the same time. By making these interruptions, one inadvertently shapes the dialogue. These pitfalls notwithstanding, the discussions gave me valuable insights into how children perceive history and use it to make sense of the present. With the intention to pursue these insights further, I decided to collect short, freehand essays written by children

in both countries on the topic, 'The division of India and Pakistan.' The teachers who helped me collect these essays were asked to stand by and desist from making any contribution during the thirty-five minutes that the children took to express themselves in any language of their choice.

I ended up with sixty essays written in English and fifty-three in Hindi by children from Class IX and XI belonging to three schools of Delhi; one, an elite public school, the second, an ordinary public school, and the third, a government school. From Lahore, I was able to obtain thirty-two essays, twenty of them written by children studying at an elite school, and twelve by children from a private Urdu-medium school. What follows is my analysis of these 145 essays. I hardly need to say that this analysis makes no claim either to objectivity or to generalizability. Nor does it constitute an attempt to assess the impact of the teaching of history at school, though there are obvious points of continuity between textbooks and children's essays. My purpose is simply to share with readers an analysis of the approaches children in India and Pakistan adopt for looking at problems arising out of their history and relationship.

Wide Range

To begin with, I found a remarkable range of views and attitudes reflected in the essays written by each group of children in the two countries. There are specific patterns of response too, distinguishable according to the type of schools children are attending, but within each school one finds a startlingly wide range of views. The range is startling because we know that the system of education in both India and Pakistan discourages independent expression

of one's views. In fact, independent thinking is stifled early, and stock expression is encouraged. In addition to this established fact, we know how narrow the range of views represented in the media of both India and Pakistan is on matters relating to their past and present-day relationship. As an Indian I wish I could say that the Indian media is categorically superior in this regard, but I cannot. There are exceptional voices in the media on both sides, but these are exceptions. Considering the overwhelming presence of the media in the lives of children in both countries, the range in their views came as a pleasant surprise.

Let me elaborate on the nature of the range before trying to explain it. Among the essays written by Indian children one can identify the following two extremes within which most other arguments fit. On the one extreme we find children who feel that the Partition was forced upon us by the British. These children feel that the consequences of Partition have been terrible, but we must now learn to live in peace. On the other extreme are the children who think that India was divided because of pressure from Muslims; that the division was allowed to take place without ensuring that all Muslims went to Pakistan. Children who hold this view apparently accept the Partition as final but do not accept the pluralist and secular character of Indian society. They feel that if Muslims chose to have their own country, the rest of India ought to be a country of Hindus alone. Children who represent the first extreme, on the other hand, feel that India was divided mainly because the British wanted to do so, in continuation of their 'divide and rule' policy. These children find the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan quite unnecessary and harmful. Even though they do not agree

with the creation of Pakistan, they are anxious to establish peaceful relations with it.

The perceptions of the rest of the Indian children who wrote essays for me can be arranged between these two extremes, though not in a uniformly distributed manner. It is clear from the two extremes described above that all the Indian children who wrote these essays resent the division of India. It is in the context of this consensus that we notice the range of stances taken. The stand that India was divided at the behest of the British who had weakened India much earlier by encouraging divisive tendencies is quite consistent with the overall view taken in many of the textbooks analysed in this study, and also with the Constitutional policy of giving an equal status to all citizens, irrespective of their religion or faith. This latter consistency is a general one, in the sense that quite a few criticisms of the state policy can be accommodated within it. These criticisms may be directed towards issues as different as the handling of Kashmir or the removal of poverty. Similarly, the general view of Partition as a British strategy accommodates differences on detail. Children who hold the British responsible for Partition perceive Jinnah as a British instrument while others mention a tussle over prime ministership as the main reason why the British had to divide India. These different views are put forward in the context of a common argument which supports India's multi-religious ethos. The majority of essays written in all three types of Indian schools echo this argument at one level or another.

Children who disagree with the general argument that the British were primarily responsible for Partition, also present an interesting, though smaller range of their own. Among such children, the extreme position is held by the

ones who categorically want India to be a Hindu nation *because* Pakistan is a Muslim one. Even these children criticize the Partition and call it evil, but their ire is focused on Muslims. Children who take this position are very few in all three schools.

The ones studying in the upmarket public school express themselves in sober words; those studying in the ordinary public school apply rather harsh, sometimes abusive language. Among the government school-children who favour a Hindu India, there are some who believe that before 1947 India was ruled by Pakistan. This belief would seem totally at odds with the history syllabus and textbooks if it did not accompany the contention that Pakistan ruled over India with the help of the British. Apparently, these children are using the term 'Pakistan' as a synonym for Muslims—a practice not confined to just these few children. As a word, 'Pakistan' has become a synonym for divisiveness in Hindi, and is quite often used to connote a tendency to cause division—allegedly a special quality of Muslims. Thus, 'Pakistan' becomes a stereotype of Muslims, of their history and nature. The idea of a Hindu India is inevitably linked with a stereotype of Muslims which is based on hatred and distrust. In one essay by a child from the ordinary public school, the expression of dislike for Muslims goes so far as to transform Partition into a benign event—one by which India got cleansed. This is the only essay out of the 113 written by Indian children in which the division of India and Pakistan is not directly condemned.

Pensive Mood

The essays by Pakistani children revolve around the question of whether Partition was worthwhile or not. Their

interpretation of the topic seems to be more introspective than the one we see in the Indian essays. It would be hasty to see this as evidence of Pakistan's much-discussed crisis of identity. Going by these few essays I can say that Pakistani youngsters have no problem identifying themselves with their country, in much the same way as the Indian children who show no sign of an identity problem. The pensive mood most of the English-medium Pakistani school-children and one or two of the Urdu-medium school-children display in their essays is indicative of a wider concern. It is born out of the recognition that India was divided at the behest of the Muslim community and its great leaders, Jinnah and Iqbal. The young writers of these essays accept the ownership of that legacy, but their acceptance does not stop them from wondering whether Partition was a good idea after all. The answers range from a definite 'yes' to a prevaricating 'may be, may be not'. Rather more children take the first position; those who take a hesitant stance are mostly from an English-medium school.

Children from the Urdu-medium school include in their essays a far greater number of historical details, which may be a reflection of the style favoured in their school. In India too, the opportunity to write expressively and go beyond factual details is associated with English-medium schools, although not all such schools are able to provide a chance for reflective writing in the course of their curricular routine. Studies of Pakistani education and society suggest that the division between English-medium schools and the others is wider there than it is in India, at least at present.¹ The essays written by Pakistani children bear this out. All these essays reflect a studied stance. Unlike their English-medium counterparts, who flaunt their psychological distance from history, the Urdu-medium

children stuff their essays with historical detail, leaving little room for commentary or spontaneous reflection. The beautiful handwriting of these children also suggests an emphasis in their training on skill and norms rather than individual expression. I am not saying that good handwriting need not be a priority at school. My point is that the contrast between the essays of English-medium and Urdu-medium school-children is further highlighted by the uniformly attractive handwriting of the latter. Many of the English-medium school-children have a messy handwriting, but they express themselves rather more freely than any of the Urdu-medium school-children do.

The children who uphold the Partition as a good decision apply the same arguments that we find in most Pakistani school textbooks. These contentions are the same that were originally used from the late 1930s onwards by the leaders of the Pakistan Movement. The first among these refers to the religious differences between Muslims and Hindus. Then comes the argument about the Muslims not getting the same opportunities in British India that the Hindus got. Interestingly, and quite understandably, the specific reference to educational and employment opportunities is made mostly by the Urdu-medium school-children. Apparently, Pakistan's ongoing economic crisis and its sharply divided social structure make the Urdu-medium schoolchild acutely anxious about employment. Other children make a general point about discriminatory practices. All the essays say that Partition helped to end the discrimination suffered by Muslims and allowed them to become first-class citizens. One of the essays ends with a reference to Kosovo, saying that Partition averted a Kosovo-like situation in India.

At the other end we find the view that the culture of

Hindus and Muslims was and is really the same. The children who use this argument acknowledge a sense of confusion regarding the basis of Partition, but they perceive no problem in accepting it as a historical fact. Some of them mention what they have heard from their grandparents about the harmony and neighbourly relations that prevailed between the Hindus and Muslims before Partition. This knowledge is held in balance with the general awareness, apparently acquired at school, that Hindus wanted to dominate the Muslims and that the British favoured the Hindus. If Hindus and Muslims could live peacefully together in the past, why can't they do so now as separate nations, these children ask. Their argument incorporates the challenges of economic development that both countries face. The nuclear bombs tested by both the countries and their missile programmes are criticized. In this matter, the extent of disagreement with state policy that a few Pakistani children convey is greater than what we find in any segment of the Indian children.

The critical stand of these few dissenters among Pakistani children—mostly of the English-medium school, but a couple from the Urdu-medium school as well—has another dimension which appears quite unusual if we see it from an Indian perspective. They judge the Partition and the achievements of Pakistan on grounds of civic morality in a philosophical tone quite unexpected in children's writing, and certainly altogether absent in the Indian essays. One of the children writes: 'Why did Quaid-e-Azam make Pakistan? So we can be proud of it and show that there is no other world like Pakistan in the map. But now everyone is only thinking of himself.' The essay goes on to connect littering the streets and casual violence with the decline of the idea of Pakistan. An Urdu-medium schoolchild questions

the authenticity of Pakistan's freedom and writes: 'We are still ruled by the English. We use what they manufacture. Even our government is ruled by them. Anyone born in Pakistan is a debtor.' Both these essays convey a sense of decline and loss, using the original idea of Pakistan as a yardstick.

The only comparable feature in the Indian essays is the inscription one finds at the end of some of the essays written by the government school-children: 'Mera Bharat Mahaan' (My India is Great). It is significant that one does not find this inscription in any of the essays written by children of the two public schools. Though one cannot make a blanket generalization, it is true that over the last two decades or so the school system has developed a sharp division between the middle class, which lives on a stable income, and the working classes. It is mostly the latter whose children attend government schools, in many cases almost exclusively so. The uncertainties of their lives, combined with the poor condition of the school and indifferent teaching, make these children unexpressive and restless, often seeking solace in a slogan or a bland pronouncement. It is not inexplicable then, though it might surprise us, that some of them should fail to record the correct year of India's Independence. The day and month are recorded correctly, but the year is given as either 1942 or 1945. As I have mentioned earlier, a few of these children say that India was under Pakistani rule before Independence. Even though we can make sense of this error by reminding ourselves that 'Pakistan' stands for 'Muslim' in a derisive discourse not uncommon in the culture of schools (I have encountered this discourse in elite as well as in ordinary schools), the error has worrisome implications. It is rooted in an impression of history that

traces the loss of India's freedom to the early Middle Ages. Firmly anti-Islam, this view of India's past denigrates the freedom struggle and the vision of some of its famous leaders, particularly Gandhi. Children who see India's last millennium in terms of foreign rule and slavery—first of Islam, then of the British—are perhaps influenced by revivalist propaganda and the media, but we cannot discount the possible effect of the state's own discourse which represents border clashes with Pakistan as a threat to India's 'freedom'.

If we leave aside this small group of essays, we do not find as long a shadow of historical awareness in the essays written by Indian children as we do in those by Pakistani children. They refer to 1857 as a critical point when the British terminated Muslim rule, and started favouring the Hindus. This is how the Pakistani children perceive what the Indian children call 'divide and rule'. Apart from the wrongs done by the British and the Hindus, they also refer to the horrors of Partition as the price paid by Muslims for getting their homeland. The frenzy of Partition figures in some of the Indian essays too, but the violence associated with terrorism in Kashmir has a far greater presence. If we were to calculate the frequency of proper nouns, Kashmir would figure as the third most often mentioned name in the Indian essays, the first two being Gandhi and Jinnah. Another frequently mentioned point concerns cricket. Interestingly, not one of the 113 Indian essays makes the allegation basic to the Sangh discourse on Muslims that they always favour the Pakistani cricket team. Far from echoing this kind of charge in any manner, the children who mention cricket decry the tendency to convert matches into battles and the practice of playing solely for the sake of winning. One of the essays mentions the fate of Indian

hockey as a proof that Partition was a big loss. Had India and Pakistan stayed together, their combined hockey team would have been invincible, this child says.

If we pool together all the essays written by children of both the countries, we would find a sense of tiredness as an overarching theme, forming a kind of bridge, between the children of the two countries. This feeling finds expression in different idioms, but the sources are remarkably similar. One source is the wastefulness of war; the other is Kashmir. A number of children on both sides say that they were not around when Partition took place, and they seldom think about it; but they see no reason why the tension that started with Partition should continue. Quite a few of them cite politicians as the source of the tension and conflict. They refer to the bigger world, moving ahead of both India and Pakistan in terms of prosperity, technology, sports and everything else. 'Why can't we forget our differences and move forward?' they ask. True, these sentiments sound treacly except for the anguish that recurs, sometimes taking the form of anger, and at other times of grief. An essay by an Urdu-medium Pakistani child sees it as God's wish, saying that nothing will happen without His desire.

Children on both sides recognize Kashmir as the main reason for the conflict between India and Pakistan, but none of them gives evidence of more than a nominal awareness of the nature of the problem. I had expected to see in the children's writing a reflection of the usual political rhetoric over Kashmir that politicians and officers use both in India and Pakistan; instead, I found a sense of disenchantment. It is hard to say what lies at the heart of this disillusionment. It may well be part of the more general phenomenon one sees among the educated.

Indifference to political issues has grown over the recent years, in response to an ever-increasing body of public belief, if not hard evidence, that politicians are not bothered about people's welfare. On the other hand, the disenchantment over Kashmir may simply be a variant of the instinct that the problem is insoluble.

The essays which mention Kashmir with great anguish are the ones written, among the Indian children, by those who see India as a Hindu nation, and among Pakistani children, by the ones who agree with this view of India. These children represent a distinct hardline position. My own experience as a university teacher suggests that over the recent years this position has gained popularity. One gets the impression from the English-language press in Pakistan that a similar process has been underway there. The essays at my disposal do not seem consistent with this impression about either country. One might venture the guess that it is during the college years that the young in both countries harden their attitudes towards the other.

In general, the politicization of college and university campuses has indeed taken a rightward turn in India since the early mid-1980s, and in Pakistan, the strides made by organizations like Jamaat-e-Islami in student politics are well recognized.² School education has also been a focus of the Islamization policies since the mid-1970s, but the effectiveness of curricular initiatives in this regard is hardly comparable to the impact that direct politicization of youth during the college years makes in a wider national ethos dominated by fundamentalist rhetoric. In the Indian case, the school curriculum has, by and large, remained insulated from changes and pressures felt from the mid-1980s onwards in the political and cultural environment. Curricular policies may have been unimpressive in the

wider context of the modernization of education, but they have permitted an instinctive kind of preference for secular ideals to survive despite the growing presence of communal persuasion.

Finally, there remains the question why we find such an impressive range of views among both groups of essays, and not the uniform, stock responses that Indian and Pakistani systems of education train children to articulate. The answer lies in the nature of the topic. The opportunity to express oneself on the subject of the Indo-Pak division excites the young, apparently because it has deep associations. It is hardly a matter of surprise that they do not get such an opportunity as part of the usual school assignments. As a topic of study, Pakistan is taboo in Indian schools, and the same applies to India in Pakistan.

The syllabus and textbooks of history used in Indian schools stop at 1947. That is the last time Indian children hear about Pakistan at school. And in Pakistan, though the syllabus provides for the study of post-Independence history, India figures only in the context of the Indo-Pak wars, which means that the last mention of India occurs in the context of 1971. Given these strange facts of curricular policy, Indian and Pakistani children do not hear about each others' country as part of their formal learning. Yet, their everyday reality is steeped in the consciousness of the 'other'. To use Bernstein's concept of 'frame', we can say that school education forcefully frames out any knowledge of the 'other' for both Indian and Pakistani children.³ Ironically, it is for this reason that the typical way in which children are trained to write on topics given at school did not figure at all in the essays I collected from them on the division of India and Pakistan. They wrote whatever they thought about it, giving us a wide variety of views.

The diversity we find in these essays is also a reflection of the complexity of education as a socializing process. Although education often proves vulnerable to the propaganda of dominant ideologies, it also has the potential to serve as a site of resistance. This potential is dependent on the extent to which socialization at school stays aloof from, or even contradicts in certain matters, the primary socialization that takes place at home.⁴ As we have noticed, the points of view represented in the two sets of essays do not all fit the popular frames of Indo-Pak perceptions discussed in Chapter 3. Apparently, despite all kinds of systemic constraints and the influence of the socio-political ethos, schools do serve as places where thoughtful articulation seems a relevant thing to do. What ought to worry both India and Pakistan as nationally constituted societies is the relative paucity of such thoughtful articulation in schools where the majority of children study. I am referring to the divide one sees between English-medium private schools and the Hindi- or Urdu-medium schools run by the government. The widening of this divide over the recent decades jeopardizes the aim and rationale of universal education.

History and Peace

During a discussion on this study at a workshop of history teachers of Central schools from all over India, I was asked: 'Why should history be taught from a perspective of peace? Why shouldn't it reflect the reality?' The question had arisen from the argument that the manner in which the freedom struggle is presented to children helps sustain the hostility one sees between India and Pakistan. The larger argument was that the paucity of communication noticeable between the two countries is at least partly related to the rival perceptions of the past that schools promote among the young. In particular, the events leading to the Partition are represented in school texts used in the two countries in ways that do not encourage children to look at the past as past. Rather, the past becomes a resource for keeping misgivings and enmity alive. Instead of imparting respect for the past and a sense of curiosity

about it, the teaching of history fosters a perpetual quarrel with the past in both countries. In India, the narrative of freedom is structured around the tension between 'secular' and 'communal' forces. Since the tension is directly relevant to defining India's national identity and its distinctiveness with regard to Pakistan, an account of the nationalist movement structured around this tension necessarily encourages a disapproving and suspicious view of Pakistan. On the other hand, school textbooks used in Pakistan present the political narrative of freedom in a cultural wrapping designed specifically to buttress the claim that the urge to create Pakistan arose out of certain irreconcilable differences between Hindus and Muslims.

It seemed an awkward question at the time, but I now find in it an appropriate concluding thought for this book. The teacher who asked the question apparently regards history as a settled matter, something that deals with facts which cannot be disputed. The conceptual ground on which this common perception of history is based is that the past is past—it cannot be changed. This view of the past carries the stamp of everyday wisdom which suggests that, compared to the present and the future, the past is fully 'known' to us. Indeed, this perception extends to regarding the past itself as a source of wisdom—similar to the sagacity that comes with personal experience. Someone who disregards the past or does not show the willingness to learn from it is considered to be immature or irresponsible. Most of the time, the argument is made in reverse; that is, when someone meets an unpleasant situation, people remind him that he would have done better if he had cared to keep the past in mind. This kind of common sense is apparently based on a romantic view of memory as a reliable record of experience. Since memory is intertwined with the notion

of one's own self, and has a powerful role in giving an identity to individuals as well as to collectivities, it seeks validity entirely from itself in preference to external sources like the memory of others and documentary evidence.¹ For that reason, memory of the past is not about reality; rather it represents a reconstruction of past reality in ways that nourish the self.

This is not to deny the role that memory can play in enhancing our understanding of history. Recollection as a means of reconstructing the past has enabled recent historiography to step into several erstwhile neglected areas of study. Subaltern and women's history, and the study of traumatic events like the Holocaust are examples of this development. Urvashi Butalia's book, *The Other Side of Silence*, is a stunning instance of the potential that individual memories offer us for constructing a holistic view of extraordinary political happenings, such as the Partition.² However, a serious problem arises if memory and history are regarded as one and if the everyday wisdom I have discussed above in the context of memory is directly applied to history. As Bentley says, 'history is precisely non-memory, a systematic discipline which seeks to rely on mechanisms and controls quite different from those which memory triggers and often intended to give memory the lie.'³ The teacher who asked the question about history and peace was using her memory—which perhaps millions of others share—of Indo-Pak relations as evidence of her knowledge of 'reality'. Unless we challenge this memory-based view of history, we cannot hope to save history as a school subject from getting trivialized. Memory may be a useful resource, among others, to widen the scope of history teaching, but the idea that historical happenings can be explored and interpreted objectively must receive priority.

There may be limits to objectivity in the social sciences, but it is a value without which it is very difficult to define learning. As it is, the social sciences have a weak status in the school curriculum. The expectation that the teaching of history would benefit from its incorporation in 'social studies' has remained unfulfilled in both India and Pakistan. The new subject was supposed to build bridges between history, geography, civics and economics. What it did, instead, was to burden students and teachers with the compartmentalized syllabi of its different components masked under a single label. The crowding of facts and information resulting from this kind of mechanical organization of social studies precipitated the dilution of the roles that its discrete components might serve in children's intellectual development.

In Pakistan, 'social studies' was further diluted and distorted by the introduction of 'Pakistan Studies' (as explained in Chapter IV). In India, the teaching of social sciences at school has come under assault from conservative critics who want a Hindu-revivalist line to replace the pluralistic vision of society reflected so far in curriculum policy and textbooks. These elements have used the familiar cover of 'value orientation' for twisting the content of syllabi and textbooks in favour of a narrow, religio-cultural representation of Indian society and its past. In the context of pedagogy, as Sarangapani has explained, this ascendant conservative approach is as deeply indifferent to children and their ways of constructing knowledge as the earlier approach was, if not more so.⁴

Truncated Debate

The public debate on school history has remained exclusively focused on its potential as a means of political

socialization. Though the debate has served as a platform to articulate larger issues which have political and cultural significance, it has also contributed to the neglect of history as a school subject, particularly in terms of the pedagogical and examination practices associated with the teaching of history. It has encouraged text writers and teachers to overlook the pedagogic problems that arise out of the traditional role of writers of history texts as magicians who show students what all happened in the past but do not reveal the basis of their knowledge.

In India, the debate on history textbooks has been focused on the distinction between secular and communal perspectives, and in Pakistan, on the meaning of the 'Pakistan ideology'. In neither country has the debate ever extended to questioning the quality of history teaching in schools. New Indian textbooks indicate that the writing of history—and consequently its teaching—may now become even more indifferent to children's learning by absorbing the influence of the quiz culture associated with television. The earlier trend of concentrating on 'facts' and ignoring evidence and argument takes a grimmer, extreme form in some of the recent textbooks published by provincial bodies. They follow the quiz approach which encourages children to regard the verbalization of the 'right' answer as the only competence that matters. The new 'national curriculum framework' gives us reason to suspect that the next generation of NCERT textbooks may also reflect this trivialization of history—that this may be the route that the politics of history now takes in order to let ideological indoctrination become the purpose of discussing the past.⁵ In Pakistan, the textbooks used in state-run schools have been of this kind for well over a generation, and there is no sign yet to suggest that a serious rethinking is underway.

Instead of Waiting

There is little reason to expect that the state policy in either India or Pakistan will remedy this situation in the foreseeable future. The zest for educational reform has never been high in either country; it is currently in a particularly low phase. In place of progressive reform, we are confronted in India with the prospect of retrograde measures like 'value education'—a device to mask the move to establish a wider scope for the inclusion of religious and mythological content.⁶ In Pakistan, the 1998 policy, with its thrust on the transmission of ideology, has little chance of being challenged or reversed in the immediate future.⁷ In both countries, the atmosphere of political uncertainty is also likely to encourage the use of educational policy as a battleground for ideological debates. Aims and objectives will be hotly contested in these debates, while real schools, textbooks and teachers' training programmes remain starved of attention. We can hardly imagine that the potential uses of history for promoting a sense of wonder and curiosity about the past and respect for it will receive official attention in either India or Pakistan, even if the two governments agree to engage in some sort of dialogue for achieving military peace.

Innovative enterprise, however, need not wait for systemic reform. A handful of schools in India and Pakistan can come together to design and offer a shared course of study of the modern period, including the freedom struggle. To begin with, such a course should provide for sufficient time to explore selected events in detail, training the students to assemble a scenario from a chosen vantage point. An exchange of students between participating schools could ensure that the process of scenario-building attempts

to accommodate the rival national perspectives. Similarly, an exchange of project reports prepared by Indian and Pakistani students would allow them to make sense of divergent perspectives. Use of biography, literature, and journalism to expand the scope of interpretation given in existing historical narratives must form a strong feature of this project. One of the objectives would be to encourage young students to probe controversies among historians by looking at the evidence cited or ignored by them. The controversy surrounding the 1857 revolt and the contested implications of the Nehru Report can serve as useful topics in this regard.

Application of analytical techniques and judgement is now a part of the curriculum for secondary classes in countries where a serious effort to reform the teaching of history has been made over the recent years.⁸ In Germany, for instance, secondary-level students are required to probe the Holocaust by analysing political, economic and cultural factors with the help of relevant material, including primary sources. In England, recent reforms in curricular practices have opened up the teaching of history to multiple forms of student inquiry, such as argument-building, appreciating ambiguity, and weighing rival judgements. Such ideas may look fanciful to us, given the poor state of history teaching we are used to in our schools, but the potential they have for enlivening the study of Indo-Pak history can hardly be denied.

Apart from bringing together teachers and students of the two countries, the project envisaged here might create an opportunity for professional historians of India and Pakistan to examine school textbooks in joint sessions. If that happens, it will inaugurate the lifting of what is arguably one of the thickest iron curtains in the present-day world, so far as the flow of ideas and scholarship is

concerned. Popular music and cinema have served as a tunnel under this curtain, but pleasant tunes and faces cannot by themselves establish the basis for a peaceful and mature relationship. Education has a vital role to play in helping India and Pakistan overcome the chronically unsettling effects of their interlocked frames of perception discussed in the first part of this book. The teaching of no other school subject has the same importance in this context as the teaching of history. Inculcating a respect for the past and the curiosity to make sense of it is a major educational challenge for societies where denial of the past and the urge to change it have enjoyed popular validity.

List of Textbooks

India

1. *Modern India* (VIII) by Arjun Dev and Indira Arjun Dev (New Delhi: NCERT, 1989).
2. *Modern India* (XII) by Bipan Chandra (New Delhi: NCERT, 1990; rep. 1998).
3. *A Textbook of History and Civics* (X) by Perin Bagli (Mumbai: General Printers, 2000).
4. *Social Studies* (VIII) by J.P. Shukla, V. Brahmabhatt, C.K. Patel, Y.P. Pathak (Gandhinagar: Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks, 1991; rep. 1999).
5. *Social Science* (X) by T.R. Radhakrishnan, I.I. Gnanajothi, G. Shantha (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 1997; revised, 2000).
6. *History* (XII) by T.R. Radhakrishnan, T. Veerappan (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 1996).
7. *Samajik Shiksha* (Part 2) (X) by Sulakkhan Singh 'Meet' (Ajit Singh Nagar: Punjab School Education Board, 2000).

8. *Hamara Itihas aur Nagrik Jeevan* (VIII) by Sachchidanand Dhaulakhandi, et al (Lucknow: Basic Shiksha Parishad, Uttar Pradesh, 1999).
9. *Samajik Vigyan* (X) by Jainarayan Shukla, et al (Allahabad: Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad, Uttar Pradesh, 1999).
10. *History of India* (IX and X) by Somendralal Roy (Calcutta: Calcutta Book House, 1990; rep. 1997).

Quotations from textbooks Nos. 7, 8 and 9 in this list have been translated by the author.

Pakistan

1. *Social Studies* (VIII) by I. Shamim and H.F. Ahmed (Lahore: Punjab Textbook Board, 1994).
2. *Pakistan Studies* (IX-X) by H.A. Rizvi, et al (Lahore: Punjab Textbook Board, 1998).
3. *Introduction to Pakistan Studies* by M.I. Rabbani and M.A. Sayyid (Lahore: Caravan Book House, 1999, rev.).
4. *An Introduction to Pakistan Studies* by G.S. Sarwar (Karachi: Qamar Kitab Ghar, 1998).
5. *Social Studies* (VIII) by M. Arshad (Karachi: Scientific Publication, undated).
6. *A Concise History of Indo-Pakistan* by S.F. Mahmud (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997).
7. *Pakistan—A Historic and Contemporary Look* (Pakistan Studies: History Component) by Farooq Bajwa (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999).
8. *An Illustrated History of Pakistan* (Book 3) by J. Hussain (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Notes

1. Introduction

1. Krishna Kumar, *Learning from Conflict* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1996).
2. Avril Powell, 'Perceptions of the South Asian Past: Ideology, Nationalism, and School History Textbooks,' in Nigel Crook (ed.), *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia* (Delhi: OUP, 1996), pp. 190-228; Navnita Chadha Behera, 'Perpetuating the Divide: Political Abuses of History in South Asia,' *Himal* (June 1996), pp. 40-43.
3. See *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* (30: 2, April-June, 1998), especially the essay by L. Hein and, M. Selden, 'Learning Citizenship from the Past: Textbook Nationalism, Global Context and Social Change,' pp. 3-15.
4. James Moffett, *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).
5. The idea of an implied reader is derived from response theory. Though developed mainly in the context of literary reading, the theory is applicable to other kinds of texts

written for a designated audience, such as school-going children. For an introduction to response theory, see Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974) and *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978). For an overview of reader-response theory, see Elizabeth Freund, *The Return of the Reader* (New York: Methuen, 1987).

2. Children and the Past

1. For a selection of Emile Durkheim's writings, see Kenneth Thompson (ed.), *Readings from Emile Durkheim* (London: Routledge, 1989), especially Reading 12 on 'Moral Education'.
2. See Sudhir Kakar, *The Colours of Violence* (Delhi: Penguin, 1995); for a historical discussion, see B. Chattopadhyaya, *Representing the Other?* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1998).
3. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Doubleday, 1966).
4. See 'Nations and their Past: The Uses and Abuses of History' in *The Economist* (21 December 1996), pp. 73-76.
5. See John Dewey's essay, 'The Aim of History in Elementary Education' in *The School and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900).
6. For a comprehensive introduction to Piaget's writings, see Hans G. Furth, *Piaget and Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). For a recent commentary, which updates the reader on the wide-ranging debates that Piaget's work has triggered, see Peter E. Bryant's essay on Piaget in Roy Fuller (ed.), *Seven Pioneers in Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1995).
7. For a lucid explanation, see David Elkind, *Child Development and Education* (New York: OUP, 1976).
8. See Hilary Cooper, *The Teaching of History* (London: David Fulton, 1992); Donald Thomson, 'Some Psychological Aspects

- of History Teaching,' in W.H. Burston and C.W. Green (eds.), *Handbook of History Teachers* (London: Methuen, 1972).
9. For a discussion of historical understanding, see *The Aims of School History* (London: Institute of Education, 1992). For a discussion of evidence in history, see Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History* (London: Granta, 1997).
 10. Peter Knight has discussed the problems of applying the concept of empathy in the teaching of history, in 'Empathy: Concept, Confusion and Consequences in a National Curriculum,' *Oxford Review of Education* (15: 1, 1989), pp. 41-53.

3. Frames of Popular Perception

1. NADRA stands for National Database and Registration Authority.
2. K.M. Munshi, *Somnath, The Shrine Eternal* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1952).
3. Satish Saberwal, *India: The Roots of the Crisis* (Delhi: Oxford, 1968), p. 75.
4. Sudhir Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics, and Doctors* (Delhi: OUP, 1982).
5. See Rustom Bharucha's analysis of *Roja* in 'On the Border of Fascism,' *Economic and Political Weekly* (4 June 1994), pp. 1389-1395. For an extended discussion of film language, see M.S.S. Pandian, *The Image Trap* (New Delhi: Sage, 1992).
6. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, *The Heart Divided* (First published, 1957; Lahore: ASR, 1990).
7. Lahore has a special place in the intellectual and cultural life of Pakistan, a distinction which it derives from its history—as a centre of higher education and cultural activity during the heyday of the British empire. Pran Neville's popular

- memoir, *Lahore* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 1997), celebrates this history of Lahore.
8. Out of the vast body of scholarly writing that exists on Pakistan's history, politics and economy, I would especially like to mention Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century* (Karachi: Oxford, 1997), and Craig Baxter and Charles Kennedy (eds.), *Pakistan 1997* (Boulder: Westview, 1998). For a succinct overview, see 'Pakistan' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (New York: Oxford, 1995), pp. 286-297. Ayesha Jalal's comparative insight in *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 1995) is also useful. A considerable amount of harshly self-critical writing has been published in Pakistan over the recent years. Two books of this kind are Ikram Azam's *From Pakistan to Pakistan* (Lahore: National Book Foundation, 1992) and Roedad Khan, *Pakistan—a Dream Gone Sour* (Karachi: Oxford, 1998).
 9. See Aijaz Ahmed, *Lineage of the Present* (New Delhi: Tulika, 1996).
 10. Roedad Khan, op. cit., and Sara Suleri, *Meatless Days* (London: Flamingo, 1991) are among the numerous books conveying this depressive mood. Interviews with two of Pakistan's leading liberal intellectuals, Eqbal Ahmad (*Himal*; March, 1999) and Hamza Alavi (*The Herald*; August 2000), provide valuable insights into this national mood.
 11. Khaled Ahmed, 'The Function of Myth-making in Indo-Pak Relations,' *The Friday Times* (10 September 1999).
 12. See, for example, Aijaz Ahmed, *Nationalism & Globalisation* (Occasional Paper, Series-4, Department of Sociology, Pune, 2000).

4. Ideology and Textbooks

1. Eric Hobsbawm, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997).

2. See Krishna Kumar, 'Agricultural Modernisation and Education,' *Economic and Political Weekly* (31:35-37, Special Number, 1996, pp. 2367-2373), for a discussion of the socio-political climate in which the Kothari Commission wrote its report, and for an analysis of the Commission's treatment of the Gandhian idea of Basic Education.
3. Conversation with Romila Thapar, by K. Roy and R. Batabyal, *Summerhill* (4:2, December 1998), pp. 3-8.
4. L.I. Rudolph and S.H. Rudolph, 'Rethinking Secularism: Genesis and Implications of the Textbook Controversy, 1977-79,' *Pacific Affairs* (56: 1, Spring 1983), pp. 15-37.
5. See Tanika Sarkar, 'Educating the Children of the Hindu Rashtra: Notes on RSS Schools,' in P. Bidwai, H. Mukhia, A. Vanaik (eds.), *Religiosity and Communalism* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1996), pp. 237-249. For a study of the ethos of RSS schools, see Gyaneshwar and Jyoti Chaturvedi, 'The Construction of Saraswati: Formation and Transformation of Saffron Identity in Contemporary Uttar Pradesh,' paper presented at the seminar on 'Education and Society in India', Centre de Sciences Humaines, New Delhi, March 29-31, 2000.
6. See *Seminar* issue 'Revivalism and Identity' (400: November 1993).
7. For a historical survey of the question of identity, see Alan Whaite, 'Political Cohesion in Pakistan: Jinnah and the Ideological State,' *Contemporary South Asia* (7: 2, 1998), pp. 181-192. For the present-day scene, see Mumtaz Ahmad, 'Revivalism, Islamisation, Sectarianism and Violence in Pakistan,' in C. Baxter and C. Kennedy (eds.), *Pakistan* 1997, (op. cit.) pp. 101-122.
8. *India Partitioned* (Vol. I & II, New Delhi: Roli, 1997), and *India's Partition* (Delhi: Oxford, 1993), all edited by Mushirul Hasan, provide a comprehensive introduction to the literature on Partition. Also see *Seminar* (420: August 1994).

9. National Education Policy, 1998-2010 (Islamabad: Ministry of Education, 1998), p. 9.
10. I.H. Qureshi, *From Miraj to Domes* (Karachi: S.A. Qureshi, 1983), p. 225.
11. See Aijaz Ahmed, *Nationalism and Globalisation*, op. cit.
12. Mansoor A. Quraishi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Education* (Lahore: Universal, 1983) offers a general introduction to Islamic educational ideas and philosophers. For introduction to Islam, see S.H. Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (San Francisco: Acuarian, 1994); A. Guillaume, *Islam* (London: Penguin, 1954); and Azra Kidwai, *Islam* (Delhi: Roli, 1998). Also see D.E. Eikelman, 'Islam and the Language of Modernity,' *Daedalus* (129: 1, Winker 2000), pp. 118-135.
13. See Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education* (New Delhi: Sage, 1991); Bernard Cohn, *Colonisation and the Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
14. Rubina Saigol, *Knowledge and Identity* (Lahore: ASR, 1995).
15. For an overview of Pakistan's system of education, see Parvez Hoodbhoy (ed.), *Education and the State: Fifty Years of Pakistan* (Karachi: OUP, 1998); Tariq Rahman, *Language, Education and Culture* (Karachi: OUP, 1999). Also see Abdur Rauf, 'Education in Development' in H. Gardezi and J. Rashid, (eds.), *Pakistan: The Roots of Dictatorship* (London: Zed Books, 1983), pp. 328-339.
16. Ayesha Jalal, 'Conjuring Pakistan: History as Official Imagining,' *Journal of Middle East Studies* (27: 1995), pp. 73-89.
17. See Mubarak Ali, *In the Shadow of History* (Lahore: Fiction House, 1998), P.A. Hoodbhoy and A.H. Nayyar, 'Rewriting the History of Pakistan' in Asghar Khan (ed.), *Islam, Politics and the State* (London: Zed Books, 1985), pp. 164-177. Also see Ayesha Jalal, *ibid*.

18. Dietrich Reetz, 'National Consolidation and Fragmentation of Pakistan: the Dilemma of General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-88),' in D. Weidemann (ed.), *Nationalism, Ethnicity and Political Development* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1991), pp. 123-144.
19. Jamal Malik, *Colonization of Islam* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1996), p. 20.
20. Tanika Sarkar, 'Educating the Children of the Hindu Rashtra,' op. cit.
21. See Krishna Kumar, 'Origins of India's Textbook Culture,' *Comparative Education Review* (32: 4, 1988), pp. 452-65.
22. Ayesha Jalal, 'Conjuring Pakistan,' op. cit.
23. Ayesha Jalal, *ibid.*

5. Freedom Struggle As a Narrative

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).
2. R. Rennie, 'History and Policy Making,' *International Social Science Journal* (156: June 1998), pp. 289-301.
3. Eric Hobsbawm, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997).
4. For a discussion of the politics of mention, see A. Megill, 'History, Memory, Identity,' *History of the Human Sciences*, (11: 3, 1999), pp. 37-62. Daud Ali, (ed.), *Invoking the Past*, (Delhi: Oxford, 1999), presents several studies of the uses which history-writing has served in South Asia.
5. Every commission on education appointed since Independence in both India and Pakistan has lamented the ills of the examination system and has suggested reforms which proved either too hard to implement within the existing structure of the system of education or had a short life. Books and reports written on Indian education before Independence carry an identical lament, indicating that the examination

system exemplifies a continuity in educational policies since colonial days. For a discussion of this and other aspects of the continuity, see Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education*, op. cit.

6. Bipan Chandra, *Modern India: A History Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1990; rep. 1998), foreword.
7. A committee was set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1992 for the drafting of a syllabus for post-Independence history. Although it met several times and considered a number of strategies to introduce post-Independence history, it could not conclude its work and recommend a plan.
8. Sandra B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community* (Delhi: OUP, 1990).
9. Marjorie Sykes makes the point in 'Moral Education', *Seminar* (297: May 1984).
10. K.M. Munshi, op. cit.

6. A Beginning Located

1. R.C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857* (Calcutta: Mukhopadhyay, 1957). For excerpts from other works on 1857 and critical commentaries, see Ainslie T. Embree (ed.), *India in 1857* (Delhi: Chanakya, 1987).
2. Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (first published, 1946; Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Fund, 1981), p. 327.
3. Tapti Roy, *The Politics of a Popular Uprising* (Delhi: OUP, 1994), p. 258.
4. K.K. Aziz, *The Murder of History* (Delhi: Renaissance, 1998), p. 126.
5. *A Short History of Hind-Pakistan* (Karachi: Pakistan History Society, 1955).
6. Percival Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. 2 (London: Penguin, 1965), p. 152.

7. For Ghalib's life and response to 1857, see Pavan K. Varma, *Ghalib* (Delhi, Penguin, 1989).
8. Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires* (Delhi: OUP, 1981).
9. Khwaja Husain Nizami, *The Stories of 1857* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1997). For an unabridged Hindi translation, see *Begamat Ke Aansu*, (Delhi: Swarnajayanti, 1998).
10. Rudyard Kipling, *Second Jungle Book* (1895; London: Macmillan, 1965).

7. Awakening and Anxiety

1. *Learning without Burden*, (New Delhi: 1984), is popularly known as the Yashpal Committee report. The committee was appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, under the chairmanship of Professor Yashpal, to recommend ways in which children might be relieved of the burdensome curriculum they are required to pursue.
2. National Education Policy 1998-2010 (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education, 1998).
3. Social Studies, Gujarat, VIII, p. 32.
4. A compact commentary on democracy and modernity in India, focusing on the power of caste and communal ideas, can be found in Sudipto Kaviraj, 'Modernity and Politics in India,' *Daedalus* (129: 1, winter 2000); pp. 136-162. Also see Sunil Khilnani, 'The Balance of Democracy,' in Romila Thapar (ed.), *India, Another Millennium?* (Delhi: Penguin, 2000), pp. 108-122.
5. *Pakistan Studies*, Punjab, VIII, p. 72.
6. Rubina Saigol, *Symbolic Violence* (Lahore: SAHE, 2000).
7. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 177.

8. Hussain, *An Illustrated History of Pakistan*, p. 101.
9. Hussain's text (ibid) is the only school book which gives a map of the railway network available in this period.
10. Sarwar, *An Introduction to Pakistan Studies*, p. 38.
11. Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford, 1984), p. 26.
12. Bajwa, *Pakistan*, p. 86.
13. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India* (New Delhi: Macmillan, 1983), p. 122.

8. Unity and Break-Up

1. For Gandhi's impact on the freedom movement, see A. Copley, *Gandhi Against the Tide* (Oxford: OUP, 1987); Anthony J. Parel's long introduction to *Hind Swaraj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) also provides an insight into Gandhi as a moral philosopher. For the 'moral' aims of colonial education, see Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education*, op. cit.
2. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 207.
3. K.K. Aziz, *The Murder of History*, op. cit.
4. Bajwa, *Pakistan*, p. 93.
5. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 222.
6. Ibid, foreword.
7. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, op. cit., p. 225.
8. Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (1951; London: Granada, 1982), p. 252.
9. R. Palme Dutt, *India Today* (Bombay: People's Publishing House, 1949).
10. Social Studies, Gujarat, VIII, p. 96.
11. Mushirul Hasan, *National and Communal Politics in India* (New Delhi: Manohar 1979).

12. B.R. Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi* (1958; Delhi: OUP, 1989), p. 135.
13. Mushirul Hasan, *National and Communal Politics in India*, op. cit., p. 193.
14. Marjorie Sykes, 'Moral Education,' *Seminar* (297: May 1984).
15. Mushirul Hasan, *National and Communal Politics in India*, op. cit.
16. Arjun Dev and Indira Arjun Dev, *Modern India*, VIII, 212.
17. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 228.
18. See Krishna Kumar, *Learning from Conflict*, op. cit., p. 1996.
19. See Sandra B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community*, op. cit. Also see Anil Seal, *Emergence of Indian Nationalism* (New Delhi: S. Chand, 1968).
20. Mushirul Hasan, *National and Communal Politics in India*. Also see Uma Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism* (Delhi: Manohar, 1977).
21. On Jinnah's relationship with the Congress, see Rajmohan Gandhi, *Understanding the Muslim Mind* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1987); Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: OUP, 1984). Also see Uma Kaura, *ibid*.

9. Contrary Imaginations

1. Ayesha Jalal, 'Conjuring Pakistan', op. cit.
2. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, op. cit.
3. Louis Fischer, *Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, op. cit.
4. Percival Spear, *A History of India*, op. cit.
5. Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education*, op. cit.
6. S.F. Mahmud, *A Short History of Indo-Pakistan*, p. 248.
7. For India, see Sudipto Kaviraj, 'Modernity and Politics in India,' op. cit., and the essays in *Seminar* (400: December

- 1992). For Pakistan, see Akeel Bilgrani, 'What is a Muslim? Fundamental Commitment and Cultural Identity' in Gyanendra Pandey (ed.), *Hindus and Others* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1993), pp. 273-299; Dale F. Eickelman, 'Islam and the Language of Modernity'; op. cit.
8. Rabbani and Sayyid, *Introduction to Pakistan Studies*, p. 80.
 9. Bajwa, *Pakistan*, p. 101.
 10. Hussain, *An Illustrated History of Pakistan*, p. 134.
 11. Ibid, p. 139.
 12. Judith Brown, *Gandhi, Prisoner of Hope* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 254.
 13. On the political tensions that arose in UP after Congress victory, see Mukul Kesavan, '1937 as a Landmark in the Course of Communal Politics in UP,' Occasional Papers, 2nd series, XI, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, November 1988. Also see C. Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore: Longman, 1961).
 14. On the Hindu-Urdu controversy, its history and implications, see Alok Rai, *Hindi Nationalism* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2001).
 15. M. Mujeeb, 'The Partition of India in Retrospect' in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) *India's Partition*, op. cit., pp. 403-414.
 16. For the Congress's mass contact programme, see Mushirul Hasan, 'The Muslim Mass Contact Campaign: Analysis of a Strategy of Political Mobilisation' in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *India's Partition*, op. cit., pp. 133-159. For Zakir Husain's life and work during the late 1930s, see M. Mujeeb, *Zakir Husain* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1972).
 17. Bagli, *History and Civics*, X, p. 121.
 18. See Alok Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, op. cit. Also see, Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education*, op. cit.
 19. Sarwar, *An Introduction to Pakistan Studies*, p. 69.

20. Rabbani and Sayyid, *Introduction to Pakistan Studies*, p. 39.
21. *Pakistan Studies*, Punjab IX-X, p. 38-39.
22. Bajwa, *Pakistan*, p. 105.
23. Quoted in B.R. Goel (ed.), *Documents on Social, Moral and Spiritual Values in Education* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1979), p. 41.
24. Hussain, *An Illustrated History of Pakistan*, p. 143.
25. M. Mujeeb, 'The Partition of India in Retrospect', op. cit.
26. M. Mujeeb, *Zakir Husain*, op. cit.
27. See Lance Brennan, 'The Illusion of Security: The Background to Muslim Separation in the United Provinces' in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *India's Partition*, op. cit., pp. 322-360.
28. M. Mujeeb, 'The Partition of India in Retrospect,' op. cit.
29. Ibid.
30. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, *The Heart Divided*, op. cit. See preface to the new edition by Ahmed Shah Nawaz, and publisher's note.
31. Ibid. p. 329-330.

10. Glory and Grief: The Final Years

1. See Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, op. cit., pp. 388-398. Also see Francis Hutchins, *Spontaneous Revolution* (Delhi: Manohar, 1971).
2. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, op. cit.
3. See C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright, (eds.), *The Partition of India* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1970), especially the articles by A.G. Noorani and B. Shiva Rao.
4. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 268.
5. On Congress-League relations in this phase, see Humayun Kabir's essay in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright, (eds.),

- The Partition of India*, op. cit. Also see, Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1961). A comparative study of Partition politics in three countries, which offers an innovative interpretation of Congress-League-British interaction, has been made by T.G. Fraser, *Partition in Ireland, India and Palestine* (London: Macmillan, 1984).
6. What might have happened if India had not been divided in 1947? An interesting analysis of counterfactuals can be found in N.C. Saxena, 'Historiography of Communalism in India,' in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India* (Delhi: Manohar, 1981), pp. 302-325.
 7. Chandra, *Modern India*, XII, p. 304.
 8. Sucheta Mahajan, *Partition and Independence*, op. cit., p. 374.
 9. Ashis Nandy, 'Final Encounter: The Politics of the Assassination of Gandhi,' Robin Jeffry, et al (eds.), *India: Rebellion to Republic* (New Delhi: Sterling, 1991), pp. 97-125, offers a psychoanalytic interpretation. For a critique of textbook representation of Gandhi's murder, see Krishna Kumar, *Learning from Conflict*, op. cit.
 10. Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
 11. See Humayun Kabir's essay in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright (eds.), *The Partition of India*, op. cit. Also see, R.J. Moore, 'Jinnah and the Pakistan Demand,' *Modern Asian Studies* (17: 4, 1983), pp. 529-561. On the League's expansion in Punjab, see David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam* (Delhi: OUP, 1989).
 12. Bajwa, *Pakistan*, p. 125.
 13. Hussain, *An Illustrated History of Pakistan*, p. 159.
 14. Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (Karachi: OUP, 1998), p. 81.

15. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, op. cit., p. 448. Also see, Pyarelal, *Thrown to the Wolves* (Calcutta: Eastlight, 1966).
16. Bagli, *History and Civics*, X, p. 150.
17. Punjab, *Pakistan Studies*, IX-X, p. 21.
18. Gyanendra Pandey, 'The Prose of Otherness,' in D. Arnold and D. Hardiman (eds.), *Subaltern Studies* Vol. VIII (Delhi: OUP, 1994).
19. See, for instance, B. Fay et al (eds.), *History and Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998). Also see Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History*, op. cit.
20. Mushirul Hasan, 'Memories of a Fragmented Nation: Rewriting the Histories of India's Partition,' *Economic & Political Weekly* (10 October 1998), pp. 2662-68.

11. Children Write About Pakistan

1. The best guide to the rift between Pakistan's two worlds—the anglicized world of the elite and the vernacular world of the common people—is Jamal Malik's *Colonisation of Islam*, op. cit. Also see Tariq Anwar's *Language, Education and Culture*, op. cit. For the Indian scene, see Krishna Kumar, *Learning from Conflict*, op. cit.
2. For the rise of fundamentalism, see S.V.R. Nasr, 'Islamic Opposition to the Political Process: Lessons from Pakistan,' in J.L. Esporito (ed.), *Political Islam* (London: Boulder, 1997), pp. 135-154.
3. Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control, Vol. I* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).
4. Socialization has been discussed in Chapter 2. For a discussion of the school's role in relation to primary socialization, see *What is Worth Teaching* by Krishna Kumar (New Delhi: Orient Longman, Rev. ed. 1997).

12. History and Peace

1. Mary Warnock, *Memory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987). Why memory and history should not be treated as one has been discussed by A. Megill in 'History, Memory, Identity,' op. cit. Also see Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History*, op. cit.
2. Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1998).
3. Michael Bentley, *Modern Historiography* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 155.
4. Padma M. Sarangapani, 'The Great Indian Tradition,' *Seminar* (493: September 2000), pp. 14-17.
5. *The National Curriculum Framework* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2001) mentions the possibility that 'the quantum of history may have to be substantially reduced'.
6. Ibid.
7. *National Education Policy, 1998-2010* (Pakistan), op. cit.
8. For papers on recent reforms in the teaching of history in some countries, see *Prospects* (28: 2, 1998).

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